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POETRY AND THE DRAMA

SCOTT'S POEMS & PLAYS
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
ANDREW LANG · VOL. ONE

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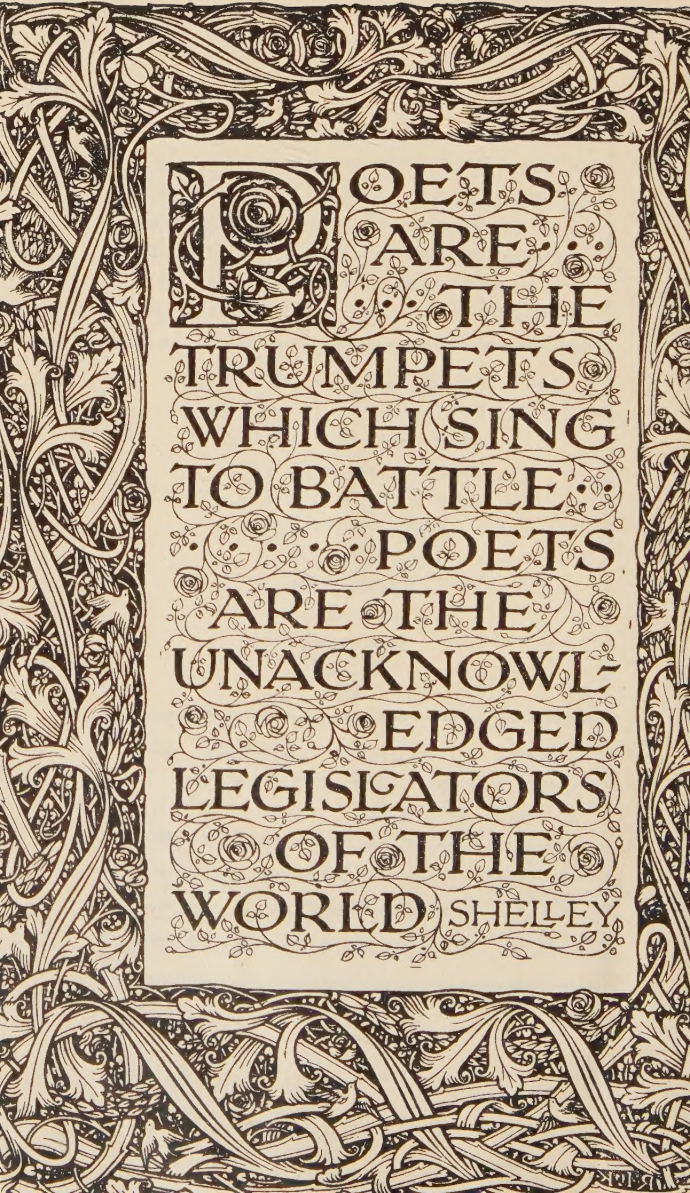
POETS ARE THE TRUMPETS WHICH SING TO BATTLE
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SHELLEY

THE POEMS and PLAYS of SIR WALTER SCOTT

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I.

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INTRODUCTION

By ANDREW LANG

The critic who would praise without reserve the poetry of Scott, has not only all the other critics against him, but has to reckon with Sir Walter himself. He frankly stated that he never cared much for his own poetry: he did not think it of sufficient excellence for his children to read, but regarded it as a "light horse" kind of rhyme, fit for young men fond of adventure and of the open air. In his address to William Erskine, his friend and adviser, in the Preface to the Third Canto of *Marmion*, he speaks as all honest poets must speak to all such friends. These are continually asking a man not to be himself, not to do what heaven has given him the power of doing, but to attempt something else. Erskine wanted Scott to study the classics.

> "Vos exemplaria Graeca
> Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna."

He suggested topics: "Brunswick's venerable hearse," the "Red Cross Knight," or a revival of Tragedy, which Sir Walter, as enthusiastic for his friends' work as indifferent to his own, thought had been sufficiently revived by Miss Joanna Baillie. He himself was content to—

> "Ape the measure wild
> Of tales that charmed me as a child."

He describes his early boyhood, the haunted towers he knew— . . .

> "Methought that still with tramp and clang
> The gateway's broken arches rang . . .
> And ever, by the winter hearth,
> Old tales I heard of woe and mirth,
> Of lovers' sleights, of ladies' charms,
> Of witches' spells, and warriors' arms."

Scottish memories, all the hot-blooded past of the race, these were, these were to be, his topics. His manner was, and was to be, what heaven made it—

> "Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
> Flow forth, flow unrestrained, my tale."

So he wrote from Ashestiel, perhaps while clouds blew down the vale of Tweed, and the river roared red below the cliff, and the Peel burn leaped down to join the stream. "The classic poet's well-conned task," he said, "was not for him," who brooked ill the labour of the file, who had no skill in magic words, like Shakespeare and Keats, who told a plain story, rapidly, copiously, powerfully, but left little (though he left something) for the heart to meditate, for the mere pleasure of its "fairy way of writing."

No critic can stand up against Sir Walter's own lucid theory of his own poetry. He is not a reflective poet, anxious *rerum cognoscere causas*, straining his sight to behold what is hidden from men, and labouring to discover the secret springs of human thought, character, and conduct. No man is less speculative. He is content with broad, obvious surfaces, colours, sounds. He gives us no deep thoughts, few really magical cadences, no trimmed and polished art. He is at the opposite pole from Virgil, but he is, except in his lack of reflection, very closely akin to a greater than Virgil, to Homer. He is, and he is likely to remain, the Latest Minstrel, the last voice of the old world, akin to Homer, still more akin to Homer's bards, Phemius and Demodocus. The deeds, not the thoughts of men, are his matter; passions expressed in action, not passions analysed in the poetic laboratory. So potent was his genius, so inspiring the martial tramp and clang of his measures, that he made the new world listen to the accents of the old. But the world must go its own way, and think its new thoughts, with Shelley, with Tennyson, with Wordsworth. Scott drove the shadow back on the dial for an hour, as it were; but the shadow, the pale cast of *thought*, crept forward again. We have left behind us the age which delights in long narrative poems; we take our narratives now in prose. Thus the Muse of Scott could not expect always to be received with the early raptures which never were critical raptures. The reviewers, from Jeffrey downwards, were from the first very keen to note the faults of which Sir Walter himself was so keenly conscious—the recklessness, the occasional blank defect of inspiration, the hasty and inaccurate rhyme, the lapses into doggerel. The public, too, slackened in its *engouëment*. Byron, the first and greatest of Scott's imitators, gave them verse often much inferior to his. But Byron's personal force, the

mystery with which he surrounded himself, his adventures, real or fabled, his beauty—nay, even his title, dominated the world of readers, who, tired of the mountain and the flood, fell eagerly on tales of the Orient, and on darkling Levantine pirates. Byron was newer, more actual, he was thought to be his own hero, while Scott's heroes were his ancestors. Consequently the wise world left Scott, and followed after Byron, while few dreamed that Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, and Wordsworth were really poets more essentially poetical, more permanent, than either the Peer or the Sheriff of the Forest. Our modern taste finds them more acceptable, and is disinclined to read romances in rhyme, consequently Scott is, probably, at this moment rather undervalued than overrated as a poet. His prose romances have been the most dangerous rivals of his verse. Yet even the most "cultured" and "æsthetic" opinion must allow that Scott's best passages of rapid and warlike flight remain unequalled in the language, while his lyric note was entirely fresh, entirely his own; solitary, unique, in the poetry of Britain.

That Scott became a poet, and a poet of his own kind, appears, as we glance at his life, the result of accident. Strange as it seems, Scott began as a drawing-room poet: it is more graceful, and equally true, to say that he was inspired by love, and the desire to please women. His earliest volume, the translations from Bürger (1796), was done for a lady, was published, probably, not without hope of its favourable effect on the one lady of his heart. "He made many little stanzas about the lady," said Lord Kinedder, "but we really thought them in general very poor." Of these two were preserved; one is "The violet in her greenwood bower," "done just after the conclusion of the business." The "business" would have been stock in trade for many an elegiac poet. The sharpness of that sorrow never ceased to sting, and the pain of that old wound rankles, thirty years later, in the *Journal*. But Scott was not an elegiac poet, not a poet of his own most intimate emotions.

His early ballads, *The Eve of St. John*, his finest, *Cadyow Castle*, and the rest, were purely occasional pieces, written to please Lady Louisa Stuart and other friends. The *Lay* was nothing more, in its inception, merely a ballad produced at the command of the Duchess of Buccleuch. But,

when he began the *Lay*, Scott was already the collector and editor of the *Border Minstrelsy*. He was saturated with the spirit of the Northern Border, its daring in war, its dread in the dark, its loyalty, courage, its recklessness, and its "pastoral melancholy." Moreover, Scott had heard some passages repeated from Coleridge's *Christabel*, still in manuscript. His retentive memory kept them, he caught and prolonged the note which Coleridge had struck in secret. Like an echo from the music in the Hill of Hörsel, that song reached a dweller in the Border valley, and Coleridge gave the impulse to Scott, as Scott gave the impulse to Byron. *Musai lampada tradunt:* every poet receives the torch from another, Burns from Fergusson, Scott from Coleridge, Tennyson from Shelley and Keats. The purposed ballad became a romance, the *Lay*. When these nine-and-twenty knights of fame hung their shields in Branksome Hall, a new poet, a new poetry, had begun their course. Good fortune followed Scott when he listened to the appeal of his chieftainess, and his Muse awoke to the ancient slogan, *Rise for Branksome readily!* His fortune, as it were, was made in a moment, and his path was clear for *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Rokeby*, and *The Lord of the Isles*. To the editor's mind, the *Lay* is as much the best of all these as it is the freshest, the least premeditated, the most spontaneous, the most *disinterested*. More and more the latter poems become articles of manufacture—not, indeed, *Marmion*, composed during gallops on the hills, nor *The Lady of the Lake*, with all its enchanted memories of his romantic native land. But *Rokeby*, despite its lovely lyrics, is not spontaneous, and the *Lord of the Isles*, with all the vigour of its Bannockburn, is as much an article of commerce as *Anne of Geierstein*. So the world, seeking some new thing, turned to Byron, and Scott to *Waverley*. His *Harold* and *Bridal of Triermain* are not written with his heart. Yet the Muse had not forsaken him. In his novels many a situation suggested its appropriate song, and these wild lyrics of Madge Wildfire, that roll-call of Flora MacIvor, that soldier's snatch of Major Bellenden, that ditty of the Glee Maiden, these lines of Bothwell, with many another piece, are not only essentially lyric, but essentially dramatic, they come from the right mouth of the right person, in the right situation. Only once or twice the personal note is struck, as in *The Sun upon*

the Weirdlaw Hill, "verses written in dejection," unlike the mood of Scott. It was "in dejection," in the first anguish of his ruin, that he composed the most gallant of all cavalier songs, *Bonnie Dundee*, wondering if it were good or not, and wishing that Will Erskine was alive to tell him sooth. The song has all the gladdest and gayest elements of his genius, a buoyant scorn of what is grey and sour—of "the cowls of Kilmarnock"—a splendid audacious loyalty; so he parts from a hero, and strikes his last stroke for Claverhouse. Here is the essence of Sir Walter's songs; here, in a clatter of hoofs on the causeway, a flutter of ribbons and scented love-locks, a clash of claymores on the target of barkened bull's hide, and, above it all, beyond it all, "the shade of Montrose," and a foreboding of that darkest hour when "low lies the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee." These are almost the first verses I remember, and they rang in the memory of a child who did not know their author's name, who knew not what event they celebrated, who had never heard of Walter Scott. They are parts of a dead world, but to enrich our days with the very life blood of the past is the gift of Scott as of Homer.

These, then, were his essential qualities as a lyrist; he storms our hearts with a *reveillez*, from dewy woods where the hart has been tracked; he makes us art and part with outlaws, "where mavis and merle are singing;" he enlists us in a company of cavaliers who fight for the king; he harps for us in hall among fair ladies. He is obedient to the past, and loyal to the dead, and he risks the future bravely. The Reform Bill was passing, the funeral knell of old England was tolling, when Scott, a dying man, by the rocky shore of Lake Avernus, forgot the haunted coasts, heard no Virgilian echoes, but murmured—

> "Up the heathery mountain,
> Down the rocky glen,
> We daurna gang a-milking
> For Charlie and his men."

In Rome, where, indeed, he had scarce strength to walk, it was not the Vatican, nor the churches, nor the Imperial Arch that he visited, but the tomb of the Stuarts. There, too, when rather cruelly asked to write verses for a lady (ending as he began), it was Scotland that he remembered, of Scotland that he wrote; lines faltering, indeed, and in-

coherent, but with a touch of his ancient passion, of the old national melody.

The Border was his inspiration, the clear west wind singing over the purple hills was the accompaniment of his lyre. Even in the *Bridal of Triermain*, he commences, at least, like himself—

> " Bewcastle now must keep the Hold,
> Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall,
> Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
> Must only shoot from battled wall;
> And Liddesdale may buckle spur,
> And Teviot now may belt the brand,
> Taras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
> And Eskdale foray Cumberland."

This is, indeed, an unreflective kind of poetry: assuredly we need other poems than these, and many prefer a singer who hints at a moral. Scott's is simple enough—

> " Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
> To all the sensual world proclaim,
> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name."

And, for the end of all—

> " Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee
> Run a course as well as we,
> Time, stern huntsman, who can baulk?
> Staunch as hound, and fleet as hawk.
> Think of this, and rise with day,
> Gentle lords and ladies gay."

Be up, be active, be in the air, and on the hills—

> " For time will rust the brightest blade,
> And years will break the strongest bow,
> Was never wight so starkly made,
> But time and years would overthrow."

It is an honest morality. *Remember on Dethe*, says the inscription round a skull of gold, in an ancient Scottish ring. Scott " remembers on Dethe " in the magical song of Proud Maisie, on death coming to youth in its glory; but, for the most part, it is Life that he remembers and bids us remember and enjoy. He is not a love poet; we have no lines of his like " Had we never loved so kindly; " his ladies are shadows, like Margaret in the *Lay*, of the one lady of his heart. It has been said that he is passionless, by those who

forget Di Vernon, and who forget, or have never known, the history of a passion as enduring as Dante's. But that passion is too sacred for verse; the broken heart was not worn on his sleeve—

> "I may not, must not, sing of Love."

Only he remembers, as his minstrel sings—

> "And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,
> Lent to her cheek a livelier red;
> When the half sigh her swelling breast
> Against the silken ribbon prest:
> When her blue eyes their secret told,
> Though shaded by her locks of gold,"

for this is a portrait from the life.

Neither the lyrics nor the ballads of Scott are of anything like equal merit. His cavalier and hunting songs, his charming ditty of Highland Nora, his inspiriting Roll-call of the Clans, his serenade from *Quentin Durward*, are not, of course, so unique as his *Proud Maisie*, though these and the lyrics from *Rokeby* are all bright, glad, and full of woodland or martial music. None of his other ballads attains the gloom and horror of *The Eve of St. John*, nor matches the impetus of *Cadyow Castle*; still less do they approach the merit of Elspeth's ballad of the Red Harlaw, the one ballad by a modern man which the ancient minstrels might be proud to call their own. Many of the occasional pieces are merely occasional—the songs for the yeomanry regiment, the political verses, the stirring song of the Forest Football Match, the rhymes for the Bannatyne Club, the ditties written for musical collections, in Scott's habitual good nature, and so forth. Scott, as a lyrist, is limited by his unconsciousness, by his invincible disinclination to be his own subject, to versify his own emotions. In *The Sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill* we have a rare example of what he could do, when he forgot his rule, or lapsed from his habit. Perhaps only those who have often watched the day decline on the extreme heights of Ettrick, and the twilight falling brown on the Tweed, know all the charm in that lonely expression of a mood to which Scott seldom yielded. By this inability to speak in verse about himself he was so confined that, but for his novels and longer poems, and the

dramatic necessity for songs in certain parts of these, we should have had from Scott scarce any lyrics, no dirge of Meg Merrilies, no incantation of Norna, no wistful snatches of Madge Wildfire, no County Guy. The limitation which we regret in the poet we cannot but admire in the man. Scott is certainly not "the poets' poet;" no poet was ever so remote from the fault he found in Mrs. Hemans, of being "too poetical." But few poets have ever been so much of a man. Being so impersonal in his genius, he did not seek a reflection of his moods in nature; being so unspeculative, he did not seek a clue to the riddles of the universe in nature. To him nature was enough in herself, and in her associations with the past. A flooded ford, a difficult hill, a glen where reivers of old had driven the kye, were his delight, and, on the summit of an Orcadian mountain, he laughs at the lyric excesses to which some would have urged themselves to be moved. Probably he was never tempted to commit, what he certainly never committed, a sonnet.

The critic, indeed, has put constraint on himself to write thus, esteeming, as he does, more highly the verse which "stirs the blood like the sound of a trumpet," than the verse which lulls and charms, or the verse which climbs heights inaccessible to thought. But the affection with which we regard Scott as a man should itself warn us not to force the note, in speaking of his poetry, beyond what he would have thought just.

Reference has been made to Scott's latest lines, written for a lady at Rome. In 1878 a Miss Nicholson, niece of Sir Walter's valet, entrusted to Mr. James B. Kerr a paper, which seems to contain a rough draft of these verses. Lockhart remarks that in Rome a lady asked him for a favour, which it was not agreeable to grant. He was asked if he had yielded: "Yes," he said; "as I am now good for nothing else, I think it as well to be good-natured." The lady was the Countess of Wollenluss. The request, of course, was for a poem. Scott's condition at the moment may be understood from a slight pencil sketch made of him at that time. The powerful frame is worn to a shadow; the handwriting of the verses is feeble—"the pen staggers," as he said, the thought reels. We do not quote all the verses, for, in the draft, they are broken and tentative. His hand "an uncertain warbling made."

" Lady, they say thy native land,
Unlike this clime of fruits and flowers,
Loves, like the minstrel's northern strand,
The sterner share of Nature's powers.

. . . . .

Mortals in vain, so says the Text,
Seek grapes from briars, from thistles corn,
Say, can fair Woollenluss expect
Fruit from a withered Scottish thorn? "

Thus his last lines, like all his poetry, more resemble a deed than a thought, for his Muse leaves him in an act of kindness, and with a memory of his dear native land. His latest written words, Mr. Kerr says, adorn the book of a little inn, in the Tyrol [1]—

" Sir Walter Scott, for Scotland. 1832."

In these brief comments on his poems, it has seemed well not to go too far beyond the estimate of them in which they were held by their author.

The following is a list of the works of Sir Walter Scott:—

" Disputatio Juridica," etc., 1792 (Exercise on being called to the Bar); The Chase, and William and Helen (from German of Bürger), 1796; Goetz of Berlichingen (translation of Goethe's Tragedy); Apology for Tales of Terror (includes some of Author's ballads), privately printed, 1799; The Eve of St. John: A Border Ballad, 1800; Ballads in Lewis's " Tales of Wonder," 1801; Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, 1802, 1803; Lay of the Last Minstrel, 1805; Ballads and Lyrical Pieces, 1806; Marmion: a Tale of Flodden Field, 1808; Life of Dryden, 1808; English Minstrelsy, 2 vols., 1810; The Lady of the Lake, 1810; Vision of Don Roderick, 1811; Rokeby, 1813; The Bridal of Triermain, 1813; Abstract of Eyrbiggia Saga, in Jamieson's " Northern Antiquities," 1814; Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since, 1814; Life of Swift (prefixed to works), 1814; Border Antiquities of England and Scotland, etc., 1814-17; The Lord of the Isles, 1815; Guy Mannering, 1815; The Field of Waterloo, 1815; Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, 1815; The Antiquary, 1816; Tales of my Landlord (Black Dwarf, Old Mortality), 1817 (1816); Harold the Dauntless, 1817; The Search after Happiness, or the Quest of Sultan Solimaun, 1817; Rob Roy, 1818; Tales of my Landlord (Heart of Midlothian), 1818; The Bride of Lammermoor, 1819; Description of the Regalia of Scotland, 1819; Ivanhoe, 1820; The Monastery, 1820; The Abbot, 1820; Kenilworth, 1821; Biographies in Ballantyne's " Novelists," 1821, Chandos Classics, 1887; Account of George IV.'s Coronation, 1821; The Pirate, 1822; Halidon Hill, 1822; Macduff's Cross (Joanna Baillie's Poetical Miscellanies), 1822; The Fortunes of Nigel, 1822; Peveril of the Peak, 1822; Quentin Durward, 1823; St. Ronan's Well, 1824; Redgauntlet, 1824; Tales of the Crusaders: The Betrothed; The Talisman, 1825; Woodstock, or the Cavaliers: A Tale of 1651, 1826; Life of Napoleon

[1] Mrs. Maxwell Scott possesses a letter written to her grandmother by Sir Walter, after his return home.

Buonaparte, 1827; Chronicles of the Canongate: The Two Drovers; The Highland Widow; The Surgeon's Daughter, 1827; Tales of a Grandfather, 1st Series, 1828; 2nd Series, 1829; 3rd Series, 1830; 4th Series, 1830; Chronicles of the Canongate; St. Valentine's Day, or The Fair Maid of Perth, 1828; My Aunt Margaret's Mirror; The Tapestried Chamber; The Laird's Jock (Keepsake), 1828; Religious Discourses, by a Layman, 1828; Anne of Geierstein, 1829; History of Scotland (Lardner's "Cabinet Cyclopædia"), 1830; Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, 1830; later editions, with Introduction by H. Morley, 1884; House of Aspen (Keepsake), 1830; Doom of Devorgoil; Auchindrane, or the Ayrshire Tragedy, 1830; Essays on Ballad Poetry, 1830; Tales of My Landlord: Count Robert of Paris; Castle Dangerous, 1832.

Among works edited by Scott, and miscellaneous pieces: Sir Tristrem, Metrical Romance of the thirteenth century by Thomas of Ercildoune, called the Rhymer, 1804, 4th edition, 1819; Original Memoirs written during the late Civil War, 1806; Works of Dryden, with life of author, 18 vols., 1808; 2nd edition, 1821; Memoirs of Captain G. Carleton, etc., 1808; Memoirs of Robert Carey, and Fragmenta Regalia, 1808; Memoirs of Sir R. Sadler, with historical notes (to edition of his papers, etc.), 1809; Poetical Works of Anne Seward, with biographical preface, 3 vols., 1810; Secret History of the Court of James I., etc., 2 vols., 1811; Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I., by Sir P. Warwick, 1813; Works of Jonathan Swift, 19 vols., 1814, 2nd edition, 1824; Memorials of the Somervilles, 1815; of the Haliburtons, 1820; Northern Memoirs, etc., with preface and notes, 1821; Lays of the Lindsays, 1821; Novelists' Library, with prefatory memoirs, 10 vols., 1821-24; Military Memoirs of the Great Civil War, etc., 1822; Provincial Antiquities and Picturesque Scenery of Scotland, with descriptive illustration by W. S., 1826; Memoirs of the Marchioness de la Rochejaquelin, 1827; Bannatyne Miscellany, 1827; Memorials of G. Bannatyne, 1545-1608, with Memoir, 1829; Beauties of Sterne, with some account of his writings, 1836; Ballad of Kinmont Willie, with historical introduction, 1841; Memoir and Life of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, 1853; Selections from Auchinleck Manuscript, 1857; Notes and Introduction to Memoirs of the Duke of Sully, 1856, and to works of Daniel De Foe, 1854-6, also attributed to him.

Letters and Articles were contributed to Encyclopædia Britannica (Chivalry; Drama), 1814; "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland," 1819-1826; *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, 1820, 1826; as well as frequent articles to the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* Reviews, and *Edinburgh Annual Register*.

Collected Poems: 1820, 1821, 1823, 1830 (with Author's Prefaces); 1834 (Lockhart); with biographical and critical memoir by F. T. Palgrave, 1866; with critical memoir by W. M. Rossetti, 1870 and later editions; with memoir by W. B. Scott, 1877, and later editions; with biographical and critical notice by W. Sharp, 2 vols. (Canterbury Poets), 1885-6; Edition, J. Logie Robertson (Oxford Miniature Edition), 5 vols., 1894; selected and edited by A. Lang (Dryburgh Edition), 1895.

Collected Novels: 1820 (Novels and Tales); 1822 (Historical Romances); 1824 (Historical Romances), 26 vols. With Author's Notes, 1830-34, 48 vols. People's Edition, 1844-8; Abbotsford, 1842-7; Roxburghe, 1859-61; Dryburgh, 1892-4: Border (A. Lang), 1892-4; The Temple Edition (C. K. Shorter), 1897-9.

Miscellaneous Works: Containing introductory remarks on popular poetry, etc., 1836.

LETTERS: Letters to Editor and others, edited by R. Polwhele, 1832; In Memoir of W. Taylor of Norwich, edited J. W. Robberds, 1843; Letters exchanged with James Ellis, 1850; to Sir G. and Lady Beaumont (see W. A. Knight, Memorials of Coleorton), 1887; Familiar Letters, edited D. Douglas, 1894; Letters of Sir W. Scott and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe to R. Chambers, 1821-45, edited by C. E. S. Chambers, 1904.

LIFE: Autobiography (compiled from his introductions and notes to the editions of the "Waverley Novels" and Poetical Works published between 1827-31, 1831; W. Weir, 1832; D. Vedder, 1832; B. S. Nayler, 1833; G. Allan, 1834; J. Hogg, Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir W. Scott, 1834, 1882, 1909; R. P. Gillies, Recollections of, 1837; J. G. Lockhart, 1837, and many later editions, 1906 (Everyman's Library); G. Grant, 1849; D. Macleod, 1852; G. Gilfillan, 1870. 1871; G. R. Gleig, 1871; J. Gibson, 1871; R. S. Mackenzie, 1871; C. S. M. Lockhart, The Centenary Memorial, 1871; R. Chambers with Abbotsford Notanda, 1871; R. H. Hutton (English Men of Letters), 1878; J. C. Watt (Great Novelists), 1880; C. D. Yonge (Great Writers), 1888; G. E. B. Saintsbury (Famous Scots Series), 1897; J. Hay, 1899; W. H. Hudson, 1901; W. S. Crockett and J. L. Caw (Bookman Biographies, No. 5), 1903; M. A. Hughes, Letters and Recollections of Sir W. Scott, 1904, 1910 (Nelson's Shilling Library); G. le G. Norgate, 1906; A. Lang, 1906 (Literary Lives); G. Wyndham, 1908; J. Skene (The Skene Papers, Memories of Sir W. Scott, etc.), 1909.

Mr. Lang's Essay, reprinted in this volume, first appeared in Scott's Lyrics and Ballads, 1894.

Carlyle's Essay on Scott was published in the Temple Classics, 1904.

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SCOTT'S POEMS

LYRICS AND SHORTER POEMS

LINES FROM VIRGIL

In awful ruins Ætna thunders nigh,
And sends in pitchy whirlwinds to the sky
Black clouds of smoke, which, still as they aspire,
From their dark sides there bursts the glowing fire;
At other times huge balls of fire are toss'd,
That lick the stars, and in the smoke are lost:
Sometimes the mount, with vast convulsions torn,
Emits huge rocks, which instantly are borne
With loud explosions to the starry skies,
The stones made liquid as the huge mass flies,
Then back again with greater weight recoils,
While Ætna thundering from the bottom boils.

1782.—ÆTAT. 11.

ON A THUNDERSTORM

Loud o'er my head though awful thunders roll,
And vivid lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Yet 'tis thy voice, my God, that bids them fly,
Thy arm directs those lightnings through the sky.
Then let the good thy mighty name revere,
And harden'd sinners thy just vengeance fear.

1783.—ÆTAT. 12.

ON THE SETTING SUN

Those evening clouds, that setting ray,
And beauteous tints, serve to display
Their great Creator's praise;
Then let the short-lived thing call'd man,
Whose life's comprised within a span,
To him his homage raise.

We often praise the evening clouds,
And tints so gay and bold,
But seldom think upon our God,
Who tinged these clouds with gold!

1783.

THE VIOLET

Written in 1797, on occasion of the Poet's disappointment in love.

The violet in her green-wood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dew-drop's weight reclining;
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through wat'ry lustre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the day be past its morrow;
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remain'd the tear of parting sorrow.

1797.

TO A LADY WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL

Take these flowers which, purple waving,
On the ruin'd rampart grew,
Where, the sons of freedom braving,
Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger
Pluck no longer laurels there;
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's hair.

1797.

FRAGMENTS

BOTHWELL CASTLE

The following fragment of a ballad was written at Bothwell Castle, in the autumn of 1799.

When fruitful Clydesdale's apple-bowers
Are mellowing in the noon;
When sighs round Pembroke's ruin'd towers
The sultry breath of June;

When Clyde, despite his sheltering wood,
Must leave his channel dry;
And vainly o'er the limpid flood
The angler guides his fly;

If chance by Bothwell's lovely braes
A wanderer thou hast been,
Or hid thee from the summer's blaze
In Blantyre's bowers of green,

Full where the copsewood opens wild
Thy pilgrim step hath staid,
Where Bothwell's towers, in ruin piled,
O'erlook the verdant glade;

And many a tale of love and fear
Hath mingled with the scene—
Of Bothwell's banks that bloom'd so dear,
And Bothwell's bonny Jean.

O, if with rugged minstrel lays
Unsated be thy ear,
And thou of deeds of other days
Another tale wilt hear.—

Then all beneath the spreading beech,
Flung careless on the lea,
The Gothic muse the tale shall teach
Of Bothwell's sisters three.

Wight Wallace stood on Deckmont head,
He blew his bugle round,
Till the wild bull in Cadyow wood
Has started at the sound.

St. George's cross, o'er Bothwell hung,
Was waving far and wide,
And from the lofty turret flung
Its crimson blaze on Clyde;

And rising at the bugle blast
That marked the Scottish foe,
Old England's yeomen muster'd fast,
And bent the Norman bow.

1799.

THE SHEPHERD'S TALE

. . . . .

And ne'er but once, my son, he says,
Was yon sad cavern trod,
In persecution's iron days,
When the land was left by God.

From Bewlie bog, with slaughter red,
A wanderer hither drew,
And oft he stopt and turn'd his head,
As by fits the night wind blew;

For trampling round by Cheviot edge
Were heard the troopers keen,
And frequent from the Whitelaw ridge
The death-shot flash'd between.

The moonbeams through the misty shower
On yon dark cavern fell;
Through the cloudy night the snow gleam'd white,
Which sunbeam ne'er could quell.

"Yon cavern dark is rough and rude,
And cold its jaws of snow;
But more rough and rude are the men of blood,
That hunt my life below!

"Yon spell-bound den, as the aged tell,
Was hewn by demon's hands;
But I had lourd [1] melle with the fiends of hell,
Than with Clavers and his band."

He heard the deep-mouth'd bloodhound bark,
He heard the horses neigh,
He plunged him in the cavern dark,
And downward sped his way.

Now faintly down the winding path
Came the cry of the faulting hound,
And the mutter'd oath of baulked wrath
Was lost in hollow sound.

He threw him on the flinted floor,
And held his breath for fear;
He rose and bitter cursed his foes,
As the sounds died on his ear.

[1] *Lourd; i.e.* liefer—rather.

"O bare thine arm, thou battling Lord,
For Scotland's wandering band;
Dash from the oppressor's grasp the sword,
And sweep him from the land!

"Forget not thou thy people's groans
From dark Dunnotter's tower,
Mix'd with the seafowl's shrilly moans,
And ocean's bursting roar!

"O, in fell Clavers' hour of pride,
Even in his mightiest day,
As bold he strides through conquest's tide,
O stretch him on the clay!

"His widow and his little ones,
O may their tower of trust
Remove its strong foundation stones,
And crush them in the dust!"—

"Sweet prayers to me," a voice replied,
"Thrice welcome, guest of mine!"
And glimmering on the cavern side,
A light was seen to shine.

An aged man, in amice brown,
Stood by the wanderer's side,
By powerful charm, a dead man's arm
The torch's light supplied.

From each stiff finger, stretch'd upright,
Arose a ghastly flame,
That waved not in the blast of night
Which through the cavern came.

O, deadly blue was that taper's hue,
That flamed the cavern o'er,
But more deadly blue was the ghastly hue
Of his eyes who the taper bore.

He laid on his head a hand like lead,
As heavy, pale, and cold—
"Vengeance be thine, thou guest of mine,
If thy heart be firm and bold.

"But if faint thy heart, and caitiff fear
Thy recreant sinews know,
The mountain erne thy heart shall tear,
Thy nerves the hooded crow."

The wanderer raised him undismay'd:
"My soul, by dangers steel'd,
Is stubborn as my border blade,
Which never knew to yield.

"And if thy power can speed the hour
Of vengeance on my foes,
Theirs be the fate, from bridge and gate,
To feed the hooded crows."

The Brownie look'd him in the face,
And his colour fled with speed—
"I fear me," quoth he, "uneath it will be
To match thy word and deed.

"In ancient days when English bands
Sore ravaged Scotland fair,
The sword and shield of Scottish land
Was valiant Halbert Kerr.

"A warlock loved the warrior well,
Sir Michael Scott by name,
And he sought for his sake a spell to make,
Should the Southern foemen tame.

"'Look thou,' he said, 'from Cessford head,
As the July sun sinks low,
And when glimmering white on Cheviot's height
Thou shalt spy a wreath of snow,
The spell is complete which shall bring to thy feet
The haughty Saxon foe.'

"For many a year wrought the wizard here,
In Cheviot's bosom low,
Till the spell was complete, and in July's heat
Appear'd December's snow;
But Cessford's Halbert never came
The wondrous cause to know.

"For years before in Bowden aisle
The warrior's bones had lain,
And after short while, by female guile,
Sir Michael Scott was slain.

"But me and my brethren in this cell
His mighty charms retain,—
And he that can quell the powerful spell
Shall o'er broad Scotland reign."

He led him through an iron door
And up a winding stair,
And in wild amaze did the wanderer gaze
On the sight which open'd there.

Through the gloomy night flash'd ruddy light,—
A thousand torches glow;
The cave rose high, like the vaulted sky,
O'er stalls in double row.

In every stall of that endless hall
Stood a steed in barbing bright;
At the foot of each steed, all arm'd save the head,
Lay stretch'd a stalwart knight.

In each mail'd hand was a naked brand;
As they lay on the black bull's hide,
Each visage stern did upwards turn,
With eyeballs fix'd and wide.

A launcegay strong, full twelve ells long,
By every warrior hung;
At each pommel there, for battle yare,
A Jedwood axe was slung.

The casque hung near each cavalier;
The plumes waved mournfully
At every tread which the wanderer made
Through the hall of gramarye.

The ruddy beam of the torches' gleam
That glared the warriors on,
Reflected light from armour bright,
In noontide splendour shone.

And onward seen in lustre sheen,
Still lengthening on the sight,
Through the boundless hall stood steeds in stall,
And by each lay a sable knight.

Still as the dead lay each horseman dread,
And moved nor limb nor tongue;
Each steed stood stiff as an earthfast cliff,
Nor hoof nor bridle rung.

No sounds through all the spacious hall
The deadly still divide,
Save where echoes aloof from the vaulted roof
To the wanderer's step replied.

At length before his wondering eyes,
On an iron column borne,
Of antique shape, and giant size,
Appear'd a sword and horn.

"Now choose thee here," quoth his leader,
"Thy venturous fortune try;
Thy woe and weal, thy boot and bale,
In yon brand and bugle lie."

To the fatal brand he mounted his hand,
But his soul did quiver and quail;
The life-blood did start to his shuddering heart,
And left him wan and pale.

The brand he forsook, and the horn he took
To 'say a gentle sound;
But so wild a blast from the bugle brast,
That the Cheviot rock'd around.

From Forth to Tees, from seas to seas,
The awful bugle rung;
On Carlisle wall, and Berwick withal,
To arms the warders sprung.

With clank and clang the cavern rang,
The steeds did stamp and neigh;
And loud was the yell as each warrior fell
Sterte up with hoop and cry.

"Woe, woe," they cried, "thou caitiff coward,
That ever thou wert born!
Why drew ye not the knightly sword
Before ye blew the horn?"

The morning on the mountain shone,
And on the bloody ground
Hurl'd from the cave with shiver'd bone,
The mangled wretch was found.

And still beneath the cavern dread,
Among the glidders grey,
A shapeless stone with lichens spread
Marks where the wanderer lay."

. . . . .

1799.

CHEVIOT

. . . . .

Go sit old Cheviot's crest below,
And pensive mark the lingering snow
In all his scaurs abide,
And slow dissolving from the hill
In many a sightless, soundless rill,
Feed sparkling Bowmont's tide.

Fair shines the stream by bank and lea,
As wimpling to the eastern sea
She seeks Till's sullen bed,
Indenting deep the fatal plain,
Where Scotland's noblest, brave in vain,
Around their monarch bled.

And westward hills on hills you see,
Even as old Ocean's mightiest sea
Heaves high her waves of foam,
Dark and snow-ridged from Cutsfeld's wold
To the proud foot of Cheviot roll'd,
Earth's mountain billows come.

. . . . .

1799.

THE REIVER'S WEDDING

O will ye hear a mirthful bourd?
Or will ye hear of courtesie?
Or will hear how a gallant lord
Was wedded to a gay ladye?

"Ca' out the kye," quo' the village herd,
As he stood on the knowe,
"Ca' this ane's nine and that ane's ten,
And bauld Lord William's cow."—

"Ah! by my sooth," quoth William then,
"And stands it that way now,
When knave and churl have nine and ten,
That the Lord has but his cow?

"I swear by the light of the Michaelmas moon,
And the might of Mary high,
And by the edge of my braidsword brown,
They shall soon say Harden's kye."

He took a bugle frae his side,
With names carved o'er and o'er—
Full many a chief of meikle pride
That Border bugle bore—

He blew a note baith sharp and hie,
Till rock and water rang around—
Three score of moss-troopers and three
Have mounted at that bugle sound.

The Michaelmas moon had enter'd then,
And ere she wan the full,
Ye might see by her light in Harden glen
A bow o' kye and a bassen'd bull.

And loud and loud in Harden tower
The quaigh gaed round wi' meikle glee;
For the English beef was brought in bower
And the English ale flow'd merrilie.

And mony a guest from Teviotside
And Yarrow's Braes was there;
Was never a lord in Scotland wide
That made more dainty fare.

They ate, they laugh'd, they sang and quaff'd,
Till nought on board was seen,
When knight and squire were boune to dine,
But a spur of silver sheen.

Lord William has ta'en his berry brown steed—
A sore shent man was he;
"Wait ye, my guests, a little speed—
Weel feasted ye shall be."

He rode him down by Falsehope burn,
His cousin dear to see,
With him to take a riding turn—
Wat-draw-the-sword was he.

And when he came to Falsehope glen,
Beneath the trysting-tree,
On the smooth green was carved plain,
"To Lochwood bound are we."

"O if they be gane to dark Lochwood
To drive the Warden's gear,
Betwixt our names, I ween, there's feud;
I'll go and have my share:

"For little reck I for Johnstone's feud,
The Warden though he be."
So Lord William is away to dark Lochwood,
With riders barely three.

The Warden's daughters in Lochwood sate,
Were all both fair and gay,
All save the Lady Margaret,
And she was wan and wae.

The sister, Jean, had a full fair skin,
And Grace was bauld and braw;
But the leal-fast heart her breast within
It weel was worth them a'.

Her father's pranked her sisters twa
With meikle joy and pride;
But Margaret maun seek Dundrennan's wa'—
She ne'er can be a bride.

On spear and casque by gallants gent
Her sisters' scarfs were borne,
But never at tilt or tournament
Were Margaret's colours worn.

Her sisters rode to Thirlstane bower,
But she was left at hame
To wander round the gloomy tower,
And sigh young Harden's name.

"Of all the knights, the knight most fair,
From Yarrow to the Tyne,"
Soft sigh'd the maid, "is Harden's heir,
But ne'er can he be mine;

"Of all the maids, the foulest maid
From Teviot to the Dee,
Ah!" sighing sad, that lady said,
"Can ne'er young Harden's be."—

She looked up the briery glen,
And up the mossy brae,
And she saw a score of her father's men
Yclad in the Johnstone grey.

O fast and fast they downwards sped
The moss and briers among,
And in the midst the troopers led
A shackled knight along.

. . . . .

1802.

THE BARD'S INCANTATION

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION IN THE AUTUMN OF 1804

The forest of Glenmore is drear,
It is all of black pine and the dark oak-tree;
And the midnight wind, to the mountain deer
Is whistling the forest lullaby:
The moon looks through the drifting storm,
But the troubled lake reflects not her form,
For the waves roll whitening to the land,
And dash against the shelvy strand.
There is a voice among the trees,
That mingles with the groaning oak—
That mingles with the stormy breeze,
And the lake-waves dashing against the rock;—
There is a voice within the wood,
The voice of the bard in fitful mood;
His song was louder than the blast,
As the bard of Glenmore through the forest past.

"Wake ye from your sleep of death,
Minstrels and bards of other days!
For the midnight wind is on the heath,
And the midnight meteors dimly blaze:
The Spectre with his Bloody Hand,[1]
Is wandering through the wild woodland;
The owl and the raven are mute for dread,
And the time is meet to awake the dead!

"Souls of the mighty, wake and say,
To what high strain your harps were strung,
When Lochlin plow'd her billowy way,
And on your shores her Norsemen flung?
Her Norsemen train'd to spoil and blood,
Skill'd to prepare the Raven's food,
All, by your harpings, doom'd to die
On bloody Largs and Loncarty.[2]

"Mute are ye all? No murmurs strange
Upon the midnight breeze sail by;
Nor through the pines, with whistling change
Mimic the harp's wild harmony!

[1] The forest of Glenmore is haunted by a spirit called Lhamdearg, or Red-hand.

[2] Where the Norwegian invader of Scotland received two bloody defeats.

Mute are ye now?—Ye ne'er were mute,
When Murder with his bloody foot,
And Rapine with his iron hand,
Were hovering near yon mountain strand.

"O yet awake the strain to tell,
By every deed in song enroll'd,
By every chief who fought or fell,
For Albion's weal in battle bold:—
From Coilgach,[1] first who roll'd his car
Through the deep ranks of Roman war,
To him, of veteran memory dear,
Who victor died on Aboukir.

"By all their swords, by all their scars,
By all their names, a mighty spell!
By all their wounds, by all their wars,
Arise, the mighty strain to tell!
For fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
More impious than the heathen Dane,
More grasping than all-grasping Rome,
Gaul's ravening legions hither come!"
The wind is hush'd, and still the lake—
Strange murmurs fill my tinkling ears,
Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
At the dread voice of other years—
"When targets clash'd, and bugles rung,
And blades round warriors heads were flung,
The foremost of the band were we,
And hymn'd the joys of Liberty!"

HELLVELLYN

In the spring of 1805, a young gentleman of talents, and of a most amiable disposition, perished by losing his way on the mountain Hellvellyn. His remains were not discovered till three months afterwards, when they were found guarded by a faithful terrier-bitch, his constant attendant during frequent solitary rambles through the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

I climb'd the dark brow of the mighty Hellvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleam'd misty and wide;
All was still, save by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I mark'd the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

[1] The Galgacus of Tacitus.

Dark green was that spot 'mid the brown mountain heather,
Where the Pilgrim of Nature lay stretch'd in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandon'd to weather,
Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay.
Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much-loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill-fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, oh, was it meet, that—no requiem read o'er him—
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretch'd before him—
Unhonour'd the Pilgrim from life should depart?

When a Prince to the fate of the Peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are gleaming;
In the proudly-arch'd chapel the banners are beaming,
Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a Chief of the people should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,
When, wilder'd, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the grey plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Hellvellyn and Catchedicam.

1805.

THE DYING BARD

AIR—*Daffydz Gangwen*

The Welsh tradition bears, that a Bard, on his deathbed, demanded his harp, and played the air to which these verses are adapted; requesting that it might be performed at his funeral.

1. Dinas Emlinn, lament; for the moment is nigh,
When mute in the woodlands thine echoes shall die:
No more by sweet Teivi Cadwallon shall rave,
And mix his wild notes with the wild dashing wave.

II. In spring and in autumn thy glories of shade
Unhonour'd shall flourish, unhonour'd shall fade;
For soon shall be lifeless the eye and the tongue,
That view'd them with rapture, with rapture that sung.

III. Thy sons, Dinas Emlinn, may march in their pride,
And chase the proud Saxon from Prestatyn's side;
But where is the harp shall give life to their name?
And where is the bard shall give heroes their fame?

IV. And oh, Dinas Emlinn! thy daughters so fair,
Who heave the white bosom, and wave the dark hair;
What tuneful enthusiast shall worship their eye,
When half of their charms with Cadwallon shall die?

V. Then adieu, silver Teivi! I quit thy loved scene,
To join the dim choir of the bards who have been;
With Lewarch, and Meilor, and Merlin the Old,
And sage Taliessin, high harping to hold.

VI. And adieu, Dinas Emlinn! still green be thy shades,
Unconquer'd thy warriors, and matchless thy maids!
And thou, whose faint warblings my weakness can tell,
Farewell, my loved Harp! my last treasure, farewell!

1806.

THE NORMAN HORSE-SHOE

AIR—*The War-Song of the Men of Glamorgan*

The Welsh, inhabiting a mountainous country, and possessing only an inferior breed of horses, were usually unable to encounter the shock of the Anglo-Norman cavalry. Occasionally, however, they were successful in repelling the invaders; and the following verses are supposed to celebrate a defeat of CLARE, Earl of Striguil and Pembroke, and of NEVILLE, Baron of Chepstow, Lords-Marchers of Monmouthshire. Rymny is a stream which divides the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan: Caerphili, the scene of the supposed battle, is a vale upon its banks, dignified by the ruins of a very ancient castle.

I. Red glows the forge in Striguil's bounds,
And hammers din, and anvil sounds,
And armourers, with iron toil,
Barb many a steed for battle's broil.
Foul fall the hand which bends the steel
Around the courser's thundering heel,
That e'er shall dint a sable wound
On fair Glamorgan's velvet ground!

II. From Chepstow's towers, ere dawn of morn,
Was heard afar the bugle-horn;
And forth, in banded pomp and pride,
Stout Clare and fiery Neville ride.
They swore, their banners broad should gleam,
In crimson light, on Rymny's stream;
They vow'd, Caerphili's sod should feel
The Norman charger's spurning heel.

III. And sooth they swore—the sun arose,
And Rymny's wave with crimson glows;
For Clare's red banner, floating wide,
Roll'd down the stream to Severn's tide!
And sooth they vow'd—the trampled green
Show'd where hot Neville's charge had been:
In every sable hoof-tramp stood
A Norman horseman's curdling blood!

IV. Old Chepstow's brides may curse the toil,
That arm'd stout Clare for Cambrian broil;
Their orphans long the art may rue,
For Neville's war-horse forged the shoe.
No more the stamp of armed steed
Shall dint Glamorgan's velvet mead;
Nor trace be there, in early spring,
Save of the Fairies' emerald ring.

1806.

THE MAID OF TORO

O, low shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
And weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
All as a fair maiden, bewilder'd in sorrow,
Sorely sigh'd to the breezes, and wept to the flood.
"O saints! from the mansions of bliss lowly bending;
Sweet Virgin! who hearest the suppliant's cry,
Now grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
My Henry restore, or let Eleanor die!"

All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour, came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed on the woodlands so dreary;
Slowly approaching a warrior was seen;
Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and woe was his mien.

" O save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying!
O save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low!
Deadly cold on yon heath thy brave Henry is lying,
And fast through the woodland approaches the foe."
Scarce could he falter the tidings of sorrow,
And scarce could she hear them, benumb'd with despair:
And when the sun sank on the sweet lake of Toro,
For ever he set to the Brave and the Fair.

1806.

THE PALMER

" O open the door, some pity to show,
Keen blows the northern wind!
The glen is white with the drifted snow,
And the path is hard to find.

" No outlaw seeks your castle gate,
From chasing the King's deer,
Though even an outlaw's wretched state
Might claim compassion here.

" A weary Palmer, worn and weak,
I wander for my sin;
O open, for our Lady's sake!
A pilgrim's blessing win!

" I'll give you pardons from the Pope,
And reliques from o'er the sea;
Or if for these you will not ope,
Yet open for charity.

" The hare is crouching in her form,
The hart beside the hind;
An aged man, amid the storm,
No shelter can I find.

" You hear the Ettrick's sullen roar,
Dark, deep, and strong is he,
And I must ford the Ettrick o'er,
Unless you pity me.

" The iron gate is bolted hard,
At which I knock in vain;
The owner's heart is closer barr'd,
Who hears me thus complain.

"Farewell, farewell! and Mary grant,
When old and frail you be,
You never may the shelter want,
That's now denied to me."

The Ranger on his couch lay warm,
And heard him plead in vain;
But oft amid December's storm,
He'll hear that voice again:

For lo, when through the vapours dank,
Morn shone on Ettrick fair,
A corpse amid the alders rank,
The Palmer welter'd there.

1806.

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

There is a tradition in Tweeddale, that, when Neidpath Castle, near Peebles, was inhabited by the Earls of March, a mutual passion subsisted between a daughter of that noble family, and a son of the Laird of Tushielaw, in Ettrick Forest. As the alliance was thought unsuitable by her parents, the young man went abroad. During his absence, the lady fell into a consumption; and at length, as the only means of saving her life, her father consented that her lover should be recalled. On the day when he was expected to pass through Peebles, on the road to Tushielaw, the young lady, though much exhausted, caused herself to be carried to the balcony of a house in Peebles, belonging to the family, that she might see him as he rode past. Her anxiety and eagerness gave such force to her organs, that she is said to have distinguished his horse's footsteps at an incredible distance. But Tushielaw, unprepared for the change in her appearance, and not expecting to see her in that place, rode on without recognising her, or even slackening his pace. The lady was unable to support the shock; and, after a short struggle, died in the arms of her attendants. There is an incident similar to this traditional tale in Count Hamilton's *Fleur d'Epine*.

O lovers' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower,
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower,
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decay'd by pining,
Till through her wasted hand, at night,
You saw the taper shining;

By fits, a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek were flying;
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear,
Seem'd in her frame residing;
Before the watch-dog prick'd his ear,
She heard her lover's riding;
Ere scarce a distant form was ken'd,
She knew, and waved to greet him;
And o'er the battlement did bend,
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he pass'd—an heedless gaze,
As o'er some stranger glancing;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan,
Which told her heart was broken.

1806.

WANDERING WILLIE

All joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
And climb'd the tall vessel to sail yon wide sea;
O weary betide it! I wander'd beside it,
And bann'd it for parting my Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou follow'd thy fortune,
Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain;
Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were wailing,
I sat on the beach wi' the tear in my ee,
And thought o' the bark where my Willie was sailing,
And wish'd that the tempest could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her mooring,
Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest winds' roaring,
That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove the dark ocean faem.

When the lights they did blaze, and the guns they did rattle,
And blithe was each heart for the great victory,
In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
And thy glory itself was scarce comfort to me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
Of each bold adventure, and every brave scar;
And trust me, I'll smile, though my een they may glisten;
For sweet after danger's the tale of the war.

And oh, how we doubt when there's distance 'tween lovers,
When there's naething to speak to the heart thro' the ee;
How often the kindest and warmest prove rovers,
And the love of the faithfullest ebbs like the sea.

Till, at times—could I help it?—I pined and I ponder'd,
If love could change notes like the bird on the tree—
Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may hae wander'd,
Enough, thy leal heart has been constant to me.

Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea and through channel,
Hardships and danger despising for fame,
Furnishing story for glory's bright annal,
Welcome, my wanderer, to Jeanie and hame!

Enough, now thy story in annals of glory
Has humbled the pride of France, Holland, and Spain;
No more shalt thou grieve me, no more shalt thou leave me,
I never will part with my Willie again.

1806.

HEALTH TO LORD MELVILLE

AIR—*Carrickfergus*

Since here we are set in array round the table,
Five hundred good fellows well met in a hall,
Come listen, brave boys, and I'll sing as I'm able
How innocence triumph'd and pride got a fall.
But push round the claret—
Come, stewards, don't spare it—
With rapture you'll drink to the toast that I give:
Here, boys,
Off with it merrily—
MELVILLE for ever, and long may he live!

What were the Whigs doing, when boldly pursuing,
PITT banish'd Rebellion, gave Treason a string?
Why, they swore on their honour, for ARTHUR O'CONNOR,
And fought hard for DESPARD against country and king.
Well, then, we knew, boys,
PITT and MELVILLE were true boys,

And the tempest was raised by the friends of Reform.
Ah, woe!
Weep to his memory;
Low lies the pilot that weather'd the storm!

And pray, don't you mind when the Blues first were raising,
And we scarcely could think the house safe o'er our heads?
When villains and coxcombs, French politics praising,
Drove peace from our tables and sleep from our beds?
Our hearts they grew bolder
When, musket on shoulder,
Stepp'd forth our old Statesmen example to give.
Come, boys, never fear,
Drink the Blue grenadier—
Here's to old HARRY, and long may he live!

They would turn us adrift; though rely, sir, upon it—
Our own faithful chronicles warrant us that
The free mountaineer and his bonny blue bonnet
Have oft gone as far as the regular's hat.
We laugh at their taunting,
For all we are wanting
Is licence our life for our country to give.
Off with it merrily,
Horse, foot, and artillery,
Each loyal Volunteer, long may he live!

'Tis not us alone, boys—the Army and Navy
Have each got a slap 'mid their politic pranks;
CORNWALLIS cashier'd, that watch'd winters to save ye,
And the Cape call'd a bauble, unworthy of thanks.
But vain is their taunt,
No soldier shall want
The thanks that his country to valour can give:
Come, boys,
Drink it off merrily,—
SIR DAVID and POPHAM, and long may they live!

And then our revenue—Lord knows how they view'd it,
While each petty statesman talk'd lofty and big;
But the beer-tax was weak, as if Whitbread had brew'd it,
And the pig-iron duty a shame to a pig.
In vain is their vaunting,
Too surely there's wanting
What judgment, experience, and steadiness give:
Come, boys,
Drink about merrily,—
Health to sage MELVILLE, and long may he live!

Our King, too—our Princess—I dare not say more, sir,—
May Providence watch them with mercy and might!
While there's one Scottish hand that can wag a claymore, sir,
They shall ne'er want a friend to stand up for their right.
Be damn'd he that dare not,—
For my part, I'll spare not
To beauty afflicted a tribute to give:
Fill it up steadily,
Drink it off readily—
Here's to the Princess, and long may she live!

And since we must not set Auld Reekie in glory,
And make her brown visage as light as her heart;
Till each man illumine his own upper story,
Nor law-book nor lawyer shall force us to part.
In GRENVILLE and SPENCER,
And some few good men, sir,
High talents we honour, slight difference forgive;
But the Brewer we'll hoax,
Tallyho to the Fox,
And drink MELVILLE for ever, as long as we live!

1806.

HUNTING SONG

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting-spear!
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain grey,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;

We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd;
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

1808.

THE RESOLVE

IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM

My wayward fate I needs must plain,
Though bootless be the theme;
I loved, and was beloved again,
Yet all was but a dream:
For, as her love was quickly got,
So it was quickly gone;
No more I'll bask in flame so hot,
But coldly dwell alone.

Not maid more bright than maid was e'er
My fancy shall beguile,
By flattering word, or feigned tear,
By gesture, look, or smile:
No more I'll call the shaft fair shot,
Till it has fairly flown,
Nor scorch me at a flame so hot;—
I'll rather freeze alone.

Each ambush'd Cupid I'll defy,
In cheek, or chin, or brow,
And deem the glance of woman's eye
As weak as woman's vow:
I'll lightly hold the lady's heart,
That is but lightly won;
I'll steel my breast to beauty's art,
And learn to live alone.

The flaunting torch soon blazes out,
The diamond's ray abides;
The flame its glory hurls about,
The gem its lustre hides;

Such gem I fondly deem'd was mine,
And glow'd a diamond stone,
But, since each eye may see it shine,
I'll darkling dwell alone.

No waking dream shall tinge my thought
With dyes so bright and vain,
No silken net, so slightly wrought,
Shall tangle me again:
No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
I'll live upon mine own,
Nor shall wild passion trouble it,—
I'll rather dwell alone.

And thus I'll hush my heart to rest,—
"Thy loving labour's lost;
Thou shalt no more be wildly blest,
To be so strangely crost;
The widow'd turtles mateless die,
The phœnix is but one;
They seek no loves—no more will I—
I'll rather dwell alone."

1808.

EPITAPH

DESIGNED FOR A MONUMENT IN LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL, AT THE BURIAL-PLACE OF THE FAMILY OF MISS SEWARD

Amid these aisles, where once his precepts show'd
The Heavenward pathway which in life he trod,
This simple tablet marks a Father's bier,
And those he loved in life, in death are near;
For him, for them, a Daughter bade it rise,
Memorial of domestic charities.
Still wouldst thou know why o'er the marble spread,
In female grace the willow droops her head;
Why on her branches, silent and unstrung,
The minstrel harp is emblematic hung;
What poet's voice is smother'd here in dust
Till waked to join the chorus of the just,——
Lo! one brief line an answer sad supplies,
Honour'd, beloved, and mourn'd, here SEWARD lies.
Her worth, her warmth of heart, let friendship say,—
Go seek her genius in her living lay.

PROLOGUE TO MISS BAILLIE'S PLAY OF THE FAMILY LEGEND

'Tis sweet to hear expiring Summer's sigh,
Through forests tinged with russet, wail and die;
'Tis sweet and sad the latest notes to hear
Of distant music, dying on the ear;
But far more sadly sweet, on foreign strand,
We list the legends of our native land,
Link'd as they come with every tender tie,
Memorials dear of youth and infancy.

Chief, thy wild tales, romantic Caledon,
Wake keen remembrance in each hardy son.
Whether on India's burning coasts he toil,
Or till Acadia's winter-fetter'd soil,
He hears with throbbing heart and moisten'd eyes,
And, as he hears, what dear illusions rise!
It opens on his soul his native dell,
The woods wild waving, and the water's swell;
Tradition's theme, the tower that threats the plain,
The mossy cairn that hides the hero slain;
The cot, beneath whose simple porch were told,
By grey-hair'd patriarch, the tales of old,
The infant group, that hush'd their sports the while,
And the dear maid who listen'd with a smile.
The wanderer, while the vision warms his brain,
Is denizen of Scotland once again.

Are such keen feelings to the crown confined,
And sleep they in the Poet's gifted mind?
Oh no! For She, within whose mighty page
Each tyrant Passion shows his woe and rage,
Has felt the wizard influence they inspire,
And to your own traditions tuned her lyre.
Yourselves shall judge—whoe'er has raised the sail
By Mull's dark coast, has heard this evening's tale.
The plaided boatman, resting on his oar,
Points to the fatal rock amid the roar
Of whitening waves, and tells whate'er to-night
Our humble stage shall offer to your sight;
Proudly preferr'd that first our efforts give
Scenes glowing from her pen to breathe and live;
More proudly yet, should Caledon approve
The filial token of a Daughter's love.

1809.

THE POACHER

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF CRABBE, AND PUBLISHED IN THE EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER OF 1809

Welcome, grave Stranger, to our green retreats,
Where health with exercise and freedom meets!
Thrice welcome, Sage, whose philosophic plan
By nature's limits metes the rights of man;
Generous as he, who now for freedom bawls,
Now gives full value for true Indian shawls:
O'er court, o'er customhouse, his shoe who flings,
Now bilks excisemen, and now bullies kings.
Like his, I ween, thy comprehensive mind
Holds laws as mouse-traps baited for mankind:
Thine eye, applausive, each sly vermin sees,
That baulks the snare, yet battens on the cheese;
Thine ear has heard, with scorn instead of awe,
Our buckskinn'd justices expound the law,
Wire-draw the acts that fix for wires the pain,
And for the netted partridge noose the swain;
And thy vindictive arm would fain have broke
The last light fetter of the feudal yoke,
To give the denizens of wood and wild,
Nature's free race, to each her free-born child.
Hence hast thou mark'd, with grief, fair London's race,
Mock'd with the boon of one poor Easter chase,
And long'd to send them forth as free as when
Pour'd o'er Chantilly the Parisian train,
When musket, pistol, blunderbuss, combined,
And scarce the field-pieces were left behind!
A squadron's charge each leveret's heart dismay'd
On every covey fired a bold brigade;
La Douce Humanité approved the sport,
For great the alarm indeed, yet small the hurt;
Shouts patriotic solemnised the day,
And Seine re-echo'd *Vive la Liberté!*
But mad *Citoyen*, meek *Monsieur* again,
With some few added links resumes his chain.
Then, since such scenes to France no more are known,
Come, view with me a hero of thine own!
One, whose free actions vindicate the cause
Of silvan liberty o'er feudal laws.

Seek we yon glades, where the proud oak o'ertops
Wide-waving seas of birch and hazel copse,
Leaving between deserted isles of land,

Where stunted heath is patch'd with ruddy sand;
And lonely on the waste the yew is seen,
Or straggling hollies spread a brighter green.
Here, little worn, and winding dark and steep,
Our scarce mark'd path descends yon dingle deep:
Follow—but heedful, cautious of a trip,—
In earthly mire philosophy may slip.
Step slow and wary o'er that swampy stream,
Till, guided by the charcoal's smothering steam,
We reach the frail yet barricaded door
Of hovel form'd for poorest of the poor;
No hearth the fire, no vent the smoke receives,
The walls are wattles, and the covering leaves;
For, if such hut, our forest statutes say,
Rise in the progress of one night and day,
(Though placed where still the Conqueror's hests o'erawe,
And his son's stirrup shines the badge of law),
The builder claims the unenviable boon,
To tenant dwelling, framed as slight and soon
As wigwam wild, that shrouds the native frore
On the bleak coast of frost-barr'd Labrador.

Approach, and through the unlatticed window peep—
Nay, shrink not back, the inmate is asleep;
Sunk 'mid yon sordid blankets, till the sun
Stoop to the west, the plunderer's toils are done.
Loaded and primed, and prompt for desperate hand,
Rifle and fowling-piece beside him stand;
While round the hut are in disorder laid
The tools and booty of his lawless trade;
For force or fraud, resistance or escape,
The crow, the saw, the bludgeon, and the crape.
His pilfer'd powder in yon nook he hoards,
And the filch'd lead the church's roof affords—
(Hence shall the rector's congregation fret,
That while his sermon's dry his walls are wet.)
The fish-spear barb'd, the sweeping net are there,
Doe-hides, and pheasant plumes, and skins of hare,
Cordage for toils, and wiring for the snare.
Barter'd for game from chase or warren won,
Yon cask holds moonlight, run when moon was none;
And late-snatch'd spoils lie stow'd in hutch apart,
To wait the associate higgler's evening cart.

Look on his pallet foul, and mark his rest:
What scenes perturb'd are acting in his breast!
His sable brow is wet and wrung with pain,
And his dilated nostril toils in vain;
For short and scant the breath each effort draws,

And 'twixt each effort Nature claims a pause.
Beyond the loose and sable neckcloth stretch'd,
His sinewy throat seems by convulsion twitch'd,
While the tongue falters, as to utterance loth,
Sounds of dire import—watchword, threat, and oath.
Though, stupified by toil, and drugg'd with gin,
The body sleep, the restless guest within
Now plies on wood and wold his lawless trade,
Now in the fangs of justice wakes dismay'd.—

"Was that wild start of terror and despair,
Those bursting eyeballs, and that wilder'd air,
Signs of compunction for a murder'd hare?
Do the locks bristle and the eyebrows arch,
For grouse or partridge massacred in March?"—

No, scoffer, no! Attend, and mark with awe,
There is no wicket in the gate of law!
He, that would e'er so lightly set ajar
That awful portal, must undo each bar:
Tempting occasion, habit, passion, pride,
Will join to storm the breach, and force the barrier wide.

That ruffian, whom true men avoid and dread,
Whom bruisers, poachers, smugglers, call Black Ned,
Was Edward Mansell once;—the lightest heart,
That ever play'd on holiday his part!
The leader he in every Christmas game,
The harvest-feast grew blither when he came,
And liveliest on the chords the bow did glance,
When Edward named the tune and led the dance.
Kind was his heart, his passions quick and strong,
Hearty his laugh, and jovial was his song;
And if he loved a gun, his father swore,
"'Twas but a trick of youth would soon be o'er,
Himself had done the same some thirty years before."

But he whose humours spurn law's awful yoke,
Must herd with those by whom law's bonds are broke,
The common dread of justice soon allies
The clown, who robs the warren, or excise,
With sterner felons train'd to act more dread,
Even with the wretch by whom his fellow bled.
Then, as in plagues the foul contagions pass,
Leavening and festering the corrupted mass,—
Guilt leagues with guilt, while mutual motives draw,
Their hope impunity, their fear the law;
Their foes, their friends, their rendezvous the same,
Till the revenue baulk'd, or pilfer'd game,

Flesh the young culprit, and example leads
To darker villany, and direr deeds.

Wild howl'd the wind the forest glades along,
And oft the owl renew'd her dismal song;
Around the spot where erst he felt the wound,
Red William's spectre walk'd his midnight round.
When o'er the swamp he cast his blighting look,
From the green marshes of the stagnant brook
The bittern's sullen shout the sedges shook!
The waning moon, with storm-presaging gleam,
Now gave and now withheld her doubtful beam;
The old Oak stoop'd his arms, then flung them high,
Bellowing and groaning to the troubled sky—
'Twas then, that, couch'd amid the brushwood sere,
In Malwood-walk young Mansell watch'd the deer:
The fattest buck received his deadly shot—
The watchful keeper heard, and sought the spot.
Stout were their hearts, and stubborn was their strife,
O'erpower'd at length the Outlaw drew his knife.
Next morn a corpse was found upon the fell—
The rest his waking agony may tell!

SONG

Oh, say not, my love, with that mortified air,
That your spring-time of pleasure is flown,
Nor bid me to maids that are younger repair,
For those raptures that still are thine own.

Though April his temples may wreathe with the vine,
Its tendrils in infancy curl'd,
'Tis the ardour of August matures us the wine,
Whose life-blood enlivens the world.

Though thy form, that was fashion'd as light as a fay's,
Has assumed a proportion more round,
And thy glance, that was bright as a falcon's at gaze
Looks soberly now on the ground,—

Enough, after absence to meet me again,
Thy steps still with ecstasy move;
Enough, that those dear sober glances retain
For me the kind language of love.

THE BOLD DRAGOON;

OR,

THE PLAIN OF BADAJOS

'Twas a Maréchal of France, and he fain would honour gain,
And he long'd to take a passing glance at Portugal from Spain;
With his flying guns this gallant gay,
And boasted corps d'armée—
O he fear'd not our dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

To Campo Mayor come, he had quietly sat down,
Just a fricassee to pick, while his soldiers sack'd the town,
When, 'twas peste! morbleu! mon General,
Hear the English bugle-call!
And behold the light dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Right about went horse and foot, artillery and all,
And, as the devil leaves a house, they tumbled through the wall;
They took no time to seek the door,
But, best foot set before—
O they ran from our dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Those valiant men of France they had scarcely fled a mile,
When on their flank there sous'd at once the British rank and file;
For Long, De Grey, and Otway, then
Ne'er minded one to ten,
But came on like light dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Three hundred British lads they made three thousand reel,
Their hearts were made of English oak, their swords of Sheffield steel,
Their horses were in Yorkshire bred,
And Beresford them led;
So huzza for brave dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Then here's a health to Wellington, to Beresford, to Long,
And a single word of Bonaparte before I close my song:
The eagles that to fight he brings
Should serve his men with wings,
When they meet the bold dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

1812.

ON THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE

"O tell me, Harper, wherefore flow
Thy wayward notes of wail and woe,
Far down the desert of Glencoe,
Where none may list their melody?
Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly,
Or to the dun-deer glancing by,
Or to the eagle, that from high
Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy?"—

"No, not to these, for they have rest,—
The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest,
The stag his lair, the erne her nest,
Abode of lone security,
But those for whom I pour the lay,
Not wild-wood deep, nor mountain grey,
Not this deep dell, that shrouds from day,
Could screen from treach'rous cruelty.

"Their flag was furl'd, and mute their drum,
The very household dogs were dumb,
Unwont to bay at guests that come
In guise of hospitality.
His blithest notes the piper plied,
Her gayest snood the maiden tied,
The dame her distaff flung aside,
To tend her kindly housewifery.

"The hand that mingled in the meal,
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host's kind breast to feel
Meed for his hospitality!
The friendly hearth which warm'd that hand,
At midnight arm'd it with the brand,
That bade destruction's flames expand
Their red and fearful blazonry.

"Then woman's shriek was heard in vain,
Nor infancy's unpitied plain,

More than the warrior's groan, could gain
Respite from ruthless butchery!
The winter wind that whistled shrill,
The snows that night that cloked the hill,
Though wild and pitiless, had still
Far more than Southern clemency.

"Long have my harp's best notes been gone,
Few are its strings, and faint their tone,
They can but sound in desert lone
Their grey-hair'd master's misery.
Were each grey hair a minstrel string,
Each chord should imprecations fling,
Till startled Scotland loud should ring,
'Revenge for blood and treachery!'"

1814.

FOR A' THAT AN' A' THAT[1]

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE

Though right be aft put down by strength,
As mony a day we saw that,
The true and leilfu' cause at length
Shall bear the grie for a' that.
For a' that an' a' that,
Guns, guillotines, and a' that,
The Fleur-de-lis, that lost her right,
Is queen again for a' that!

We'll twine her in a friendly knot
With England's Rose, and a' that;
The Shamrock shall not be forgot,
For Wellington made braw that.
The Thistle, though her leaf be rude,
Yet faith we'll no misca' that,
She shelter'd in her solitude
The Fleur-de-lis, for a' that.

The Austrian Vine, the Prussian Pine
(For Blucher's sake, hurra that),
The Spanish Olive, too, shall join,
And bloom in peace for a' that.
Stout Russia's Hemp, so surely twined
Around our wreath we'll draw that,
And he that would the cord unbind,
Shall have it for his gra-vat!

[1] Sung at the first meeting of the Pitt Club of Scotland, and published in the *Scots Magazine* for July, 1814.

Or, if to choke sae puir a sot,
  Your pity scorn to thraw that,
The Devil's elbow be his lot,
  Where he may sit and claw that.
In spite of slight, in spite of might,
  In spite of brags, an' a' that,
The lads that battled for the right,
  Have won the day, an' a' that!

There's ae bit spot I had forgot,
  America they ca' that!
A coward plot her rats had got
  Their father's flag to gnaw that:
Now see it fly top-gallant high,
  Atlantic winds shall blaw that,
And Yankee loon, beware your croun,
  There's kames in hand to claw that!

For on the land, or on the sea,
  Where'er the breezes blaw that,
The British Flag shall bear the grie,
  And win the day for a' that!

SONG

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PITT CLUB OF SCOTLAND

O, dread was the time, and more dreadful the omen,
  When the brave on Marengo lay slaughter'd in vain,
And beholding broad Europe bow'd down by her foemen,
  Pitt closed in his anguish the map of her reign!
Not the fate of broad Europe could bend his brave spirit
  To take for his country the safety of shame;
O, then in her triumph remember his merit,
  And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Round the husbandman's head, while he traces the furrow,
  The mists of the winter may mingle with rain,
He may plough it with labour, and sow it in sorrow
  And sigh while he fears he has sow'd it in vain;
He may die ere his children shall reap in their gladness,
  But the blithe harvest-home shall remember his claim;
And their jubilee-shout shall be soften'd with sadness,
  While they hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Though anxious and timeless his life was expended,
  In toils for our country preserved by his care,

Though he died ere one ray o'er the nations ascended,
To light the long darkness of doubt and despair;
The storms he endured in our Britain's December,
The perils his wisdom foresaw and o'ercame,
In her glory's rich harvest shall Britain remember,
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Nor forget His grey head, who, all dark in affliction,
Is deaf to the tale of our victories won,
And to sounds the most dear to paternal affection,
The shout of his people applauding his Son;
By his firmness unmoved in success and disaster,
By his long reign of virtue, remember his claim!
With our tribute to Pitt join the praise of his Master
Though a tear stain the goblet that flows to his name.

Yet again fill the wine-cup, and change the sad measure,
The rites of our grief and our gratitude paid,
To our Prince, to our Heroes, devote the bright treasure,
The wisdom that plann'd, and the zeal that obey'd.
Fill Wellington's cup till it beam like his glory,
Forget not our own brave Dalhousie and Græme;
A thousand years hence hearts shall bound at their story,
And hallow the goblet that flows to their fame.

1814.

PHAROS LOQUITUR

Far in the bosom of the deep,
O'er these wild shelves my watch I keep,
A ruddy gem of changeful light,
Bound on the dusky brow of night,
The seaman bids my lustre hail,
And scorns to strike his timorous sail.

1814.

LINES ADDRESSED TO RANALD MACDONALD, ESQ. OF STAFFA

Staffa, sprung from high Macdonald,
Worthy branch of old Clan-Ranald!
Staffa! king of all kind fellows!
Well befall thy hills and valleys,
Lakes and inlets, deeps and shallows—
Cliffs of darkness, caves of wonder,
Echoing the Atlantic thunder;
Mountains which the grey mist covers,

Where the Chieftain spirit hovers,
Pausing while his pinions quiver,
Stretch'd to quit our land for ever!
Each kind influence reign above thee!
Warmer heart, 'twixt this and Staffa
Beats not, than in heart of Staffa!

1814.

LETTER IN VERSE

ON THE VOYAGE WITH THE COMMISSIONERS OF NORTHERN LIGHTS. TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

Lighthouse Yacht in the Sound of Lerwick,
Zetland, 8th August 1814.

Health to the chieftain from his clansman true!
From her true minstrel, health to fair Buccleuch!
Health from the isles, where dewy Morning weaves
Her chaplet with the tints that Twilight leaves;
Where late the sun scarce vanish'd from the sight,
And his bright pathway graced the short-lived night,
Though darker now as autumn's shades extend,
The north winds whistle and the mists ascend!
Health from the land where eddying whirlwinds toss
The storm-rock'd *cradle* of the Cape of Noss;
On outstretch'd cords the giddy engine slides,
His own strong arm the bold adventurer guides,
And he that lists such desperate feat to try,
May, like the sea-mew, skim 'twixt surf and sky,
And feel the mid-air gales around him blow,
And see the billows rage five hundred feet below.

Here, by each stormy peak and desert shore,
The hardy islesman tugs the daring oar,
Practised alike his venturous course to keep,
Through the white breakers or the pathless deep,
By ceaseless peril and by toil to gain
A wretched pittance from the niggard main.
And when the worn-out drudge old ocean leaves,
What comfort greets him, and what hut receives?
Lady! the worst your presence ere has cheer'd
(When want and sorrow fled as you appear'd)
Were to a Zetlander as the high dome
Of proud Drumlanrig to my humble home.
Here rise no groves, and here no gardens blow,
Here even the hardy heath scarce dares to grow;
But rocks on rocks, in mist and storm array'd,
Stretch far to sea their giant colonnade,

With many a cavern seam'd, the dreary haunt
Of the dun seal and swarthy cormorant.
Wild round their rifted brows, with frequent cry
As of lament, the gulls and gannets fly,
And from their sable base, with sullen sound,
In sheets of whitening foam the waves rebound.

Yet even these coasts a touch of envy gain
From those whose land has known oppression's chain;
For here the industrious Dutchman comes once more
To moor his fishing craft by Bressay's shore;
Greets every former mate and brother tar,
Marvels how Lerwick 'scaped the rage of war,
Tells many a tale of Gallic outrage done,
And ends by blessing God and Wellington.
Here too the Greenland tar, a fiercer guest,
Claims a brief hour of riot, not of rest;
Proves each wild frolic that in wine has birth,
And wakes the land with brawls and boisterous mirth.
A sadder sight on yon poor vessel's prow
The captive Norseman sits in silent woe,
And eyes the flags of Britain as they flow.
Hard fate of war, which bade her terrors sway
His destined course, and seize so mean a prey;
A bark with planks so warp'd and seams so riven,
She scarce might face the gentlest airs of heaven:
Pensive he sits, and questions oft if none
Can list his speech, and understand his moan;
In vain—no Islesman now can use the tongue
Of the bold Norse, from whom their lineage sprung.
Not thus of old the Norsemen hither came,
Won by the love of danger or of fame;
On every storm-beat cape a shapeless tower
Tells of their wars, their conquests, and their power;
For ne'er for Grecia's vales, nor Latian land,
Was fiercer strife than for this barren strand;
A race severe—the isle and ocean lords,
Loved for its own delight the strife of swords;
With scornful laugh the mortal pang defied,
And blest their gods that they in battle died.

Such were the sires of Zetland's simple race,
And still the eye may faint resemblance trace
In the blue eye, tall form, proportion fair,
The limbs athletic, and the long light hair—
(Such was the mien, as Scald and Minstrel sings,
Of fair-hair'd Harold, first of Norway's Kings;)
But their high deeds to scale these crags confined,
Their only warfare is with waves and wind.

Why should I talk of Mousa's castled coast?
Why of the horrors of the Sumburgh Rost?
May not these bald disjointed lines suffice,
Penn'd while my comrades whirl the rattling dice—
While down the cabin skylight lessening shine
The rays, and eve is chased with mirth and wine?
Imagined, while down Mousa's desert bay
Our well-trimm'd vessel urged her nimble way,
While to the freshening breeze she lean'd her side,
And bade her bowsprit kiss the foamy tide?

Such are the lays that Zetland Isles supply;
Drench'd with the drizzly spray and dropping sky,
Weary and wet, a sea-sick minstrel I.——W. Scott.

POSTSCRIPTUM

Kirkwall, Orkney, Aug. 13, 1814.

In respect that your Grace has commission'd a Kraken,
You will please be inform'd that they seldom are taken;
It is January two years, the Zetland folks say,
Since they saw the last Kraken in Scalloway bay;
He lay in the offing a fortnight or more,
But the devil a Zetlander put from the shore,
Though bold in the seas of the North to assail
The morse and the sea-horse, the grampus and whale.
If your Grace thinks I'm writing the thing that is not,
You may ask at a namesake of ours, Mr. Scott—
(He's not from our clan, though his merits deserve it,
But springs, I'm inform'd, from the Scotts of Scotstarvet;)
He question'd the folks who beheld it with eyes,
But they differ'd confoundedly as to its size.
For instance, the modest and diffident swore
That it seem'd like the keel of a ship, and no more—
Those of eyesight more clear, or of fancy more high,
Said it rose like an island 'twixt ocean and sky—
But all of the hulk had a steady opinion
That 'twas sure a *live* subject of Neptune's dominion—
And I think, my Lord Duke, your Grace hardly would wish,
To cumber your house, such a kettle of fish.
Had your order related to night-caps or hose,
Or mittens of worsted, there's plenty of those.
Or would you be pleased but to fancy a whale?
And direct me to send it—by sea or by mail?
The season, I'm told, is nigh over, but still
I could get you one fit for the lake at Bowhill.
Indeed, as to whales, there's no need to be thrifty,
Since one day last fortnight two hundred and fifty,
Pursued by seven Orkneymen's boats and no more,

Betwixt Truffness and Luffness were drawn on the shore!
You'll ask if I saw this same wonderful sight;
I own that I did not, but easily might—
For this mighty shoal of leviathans lay
On our lee-beam a mile, in the hoop of the bay,
And the islesmen of Sanda were all at the spoil,
And *flinching* (so term it) the blubber to boil;
(Ye spirits of lavender, drown the reflection
That awakes at the thoughts of this odorous dissection.)
To see this huge marvel full fain would we go,
But Wilson, the wind, and the current, said no.
We have now got to Kirkwall, and needs I must stare
When I think that in verse I have once call'd it *fair;*
'Tis a base little borough, both dirty and mean—
There is nothing to hear, and there's nought to be seen,
Save a church, where, of old times, a prelate harangued,
And a palace that's built by an earl that was hang'd.
But, farewell to Kirkwall—aboard we are going,
The anchor's a-peak, and the breezes are blowing;
Our commodore calls all his band to their places,
And 'tis time to release you—good night to your Graces!

SONGS AND VERSES FROM WAVERLEY

(1)—BRIDAL SONG

To the tune of "I have been a Fiddler," etc.

And did ye not hear of a mirth befell
The morrow after a wedding day,
And carrying a bride at home to dwell?
And away to Tewin, away, away.

The quintain was set, and the garlands were made,
'Tis pity old customs should ever decay;
And woe be to him that was horsed on a jade,
For he carried no credit away, away.

We met a concert of fiddle-de-dees;
We set them a cockhorse, and made them play
The winning of Bullen, and Upsey-frees,
And away to Tewin, away, away!

There was ne'er a lad in all the parish
That would go to the plough that day;
But on his fore-horse his wench he carries,
And away to Tewin, away, away!

The butler was quick, and the ale he did tap,
  The maidens did make the chamber full gay;
The servants did give me a fuddling cup,
  And I did carry't away, away.

The smith of the town his liquor so took,
  That he was persuaded that the ground look'd blue;
And I dare boldly be sworn on a book,
  Such smiths as he there's but a few.

A posset was made, and the women did sip,
  And simpering said, they could eat no more;
Full many a maiden was laid on the lip,—
  I'll say no more, but give o'er (give o'er).

Appendix to the General Preface.

(2)—WAVERLEY

Late, when the autumn evening fell
On Mirkwood-Mere's romantic dell,
The lake return'd, in chasten'd gleam,
The purple cloud, the golden beam:
Reflected in the crystal pool,
Headland and bank lay fair and cool;
The weather-tinted rock and tower,
Each drooping tree, each fairy flower,
So true, so soft, the mirror gave,
As if there lay beneath the wave,
Secure from trouble, toil, and care,
A world than earthly world more fair.

But distant winds began to wake,
And roused the Genius of the Lake!
He heard the groaning of the oak,
And donn'd at once his sable cloak,
As warrior, at the battle cry,
Invests him with his panoply:
Then, as the whirlwind nearer press'd,
He 'gan to shake his foamy crest
O'er furrow'd brow and blacken'd cheek,
And bade his surge in thunder speak.
In wild and broken eddies whirl'd,
Flitted that fond ideal world;
And, to the shore in tumult tost,
The realms of fairy bliss were lost.

Yet, with a stern delight and strange,
I saw the spirit-stirring change.
As warr'd the wind with wave and wood,

Upon the ruin'd tower I stood,
And felt my heart more strongly bound,
Responsive to the lofty sound,
While, joying in the mighty roar,
I mourn'd that tranquil scene no more.

So, on the idle dreams of youth
Breaks the loud trumpet-call of truth,
Bids each fair vision pass away,
Like landscape on the lake that lay,
As fair, as flitting, and as frail,
As that which fled the autumn gale—
For ever dead to fancy's eye
Be each gay form that glided by,
While dreams of love and lady's charms
Give place to honour and to arms!

(3)—DAVIE GELLATLEY'S SONG [1]

False love, and hast thou play'd me this
In summer among the flowers?
I will repay thee back again
In winter among the showers.
Unless again, again, my love,
Unless you turn again;
As you with other maidens rove,
I'll smile on other men.

THE REPLY

The Knight's to the mountain
His bugle to wind;
The Lady's to greenwood
Her garland to bind.
The bower of Burd Ellen
Has moss on the floor,
That the step of Lord William
Be silent and sure.

(4)—SCENE IN LUCKIE MACLEARY'S TAVERN

Mon cœur volage, dit-elle,
N'est pas pour vous, garçon,
Est pour un homme de guerre,
Qui a barbe au menton.
Lon, Lon, Laridon.

[1] "This is a genuine ancient fragment, with some alteration in the last two lines."

Qui porte chapeau a plume,
Soulier a rouge talon,
Qui joue de la flute,
Aussi de violon.
Lon, Lon, Laridon.

It's up Glenbarchan's braes I gaed,
And o'er the bent of Killiebraid,
And mony a weary cast I made,
To cuittle the moor-fowl's tail.

If up a bonny black-cock should spring,
To whistle him down wi' a slug in his wing,
And strap him on to my lunzie string,
Right seldom would I fail.

(5)—"HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY"

Hie away, hie away,
Over bank and over brae,
Where the copsewood is the greenest,
Where the fountains glisten sheenest,
Where the lady-fern grows strongest,
Where the morning dew lies longest,
Where the black-cock sweetest sips it,
Where the fairy latest trips it:
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,
Over bank and over brae,
Hie away, hie away.

(6)—ST. SWITHIN'S CHAIR

On Hallow-Mass Eve, ere you boune ye to rest,
Ever beware that your couch be bless'd;
Sign it with cross, and sain it with bead,
Sing the Ave, and say the Creed.

For on Hallow-Mass Eve the Night-Hag will ride,
And all her nine-fold sweeping on by her side,
Whether the wind sing lowly or loud,
Sailing through moonshine or swath'd in the cloud.

The Lady she sate in St. Swithin's Chair,
The dew of the night has damp'd her hair:
Her cheek was pale—but resolved and high
Was the word of her lip and the glance of her eye.

She mutter'd the spell of Swithin bold,
When his naked foot traced the midnight wold,
When he stopp'd the Hag as she rode the night,
And bade her descend, and her promise plight.

He that dare sit on St. Swithin's Chair,
When the Night-Hag wings the troubled air,
Questions three, when he speaks the spell,
He may ask, and she must tell.

The Baron has been with King Robert his liege,
These three long years in battle and siege;
News are there none of his weal or his woe,
And fain the Lady his fate would know.

She shudders and stops as the charm she speaks;—
Is it the moody owl that shrieks?
Or is that sound, betwixt laughter and scream,
The voice of the Demon who haunts the stream?

The moan of the wind sunk silent and low,
And the roaring torrent had ceased to flow;
The calm was more dreadful than raging storm,
When the cold grey mist brought the ghastly form!

. . . . . .

(7)—DAVIE GELLATLEY'S SONG

Young men will love thee more fair and more fast;
Heard ye so merry the little bird sing?
Old men's love the longest will last,
And the throstle-cock's head is under his wing.

The young man's wrath is like light straw on fire;
Heard ye so merry the little bird sing?
But like red-hot steel is the old man's ire,
And the throstle-cock's head is under his wing.

The young man will brawl at the evening board;
Heard ye so merry the little bird sing?
But the old man will draw at the dawning the sword,
And the throstle-cock's head is under his wing.

(8)—JANET GELLATLEY'S ALLEGED WITCHCRAFT

All those idle thoughts and phantasies,
Devices, dreams, opinions unsound,
Shows, visions, soothsays, and prophecies,
And all that feigned is, as leasings, tales, and lies.

(9)—FLORA MACIVOR'S SONG

There is mist on the mountain, and night on the vale,
But more dark is the sleep of the sons of the Gael.
A stranger commanded—it sunk on the land,
It has frozen each heart, and benumb'd every hand!

The dirk and the target lie sordid with dust,
The bloodless claymore is but redden'd with rust;
On the hill or the glen if a gun should appear,
It is only to war with the heath-cock or deer.

The deeds of our sires if our bards should rehearse,
Let a blush or a blow be the meed of their verse!
Be mute every string, and be hush'd every tone,
That shall bid us remember the fame that is flown.

But the dark hours of night and of slumber are past,
The morn on our mountains is dawning at last;
Glenaladale's peaks are illumed with the rays,
And the streams of Glenfinnan leap bright in the blaze.

O high-minded Moray!—the exiled—the dear!—
In the blush of the dawning the STANDARD uprear!
Wide, wide on the winds of the north let it fly,
Like the sun's latest flash when the tempest is nigh!

Ye sons of the strong, when that dawning shall break,
Need the harp of the aged remind you to wake?
That dawn never beam'd on your forefathers' eye,
But it roused each high chieftain to vanquish or die.

O sprung from the Kings who in Islay kept state,
Proud chiefs of Clan-Ranald, Glengary, and Sleat!
Combine like three streams from one mountain of snow,
And resistless in union rush down on the foe.

True son of Sir Evan, undaunted Lochiel,
Place thy targe on thy shoulder and burnish thy steel!
Rough Keppoch, give breath to thy bugle's bold swell,
Till far Coryarrick resound to the knell!

Stern son of Lord Kenneth, high chief of Kintail,
Let the stag in thy standard bound wild in the gale!
May the race of Clan-Gillian, the fearless and free,
Remember Glenlivat, Harlaw, and Dundee!

Let the clan of grey Fingon, whose offspring has given
Such heroes to earth, and such martyrs to heaven,
Unite with the race of renown'd Rorri More,
To launch the long galley, and stretch to the oar!

How Mac-Shimei will joy when their chief shall display
The yew-crested bonnet o'er tresses of grey!
How the race of wrong'd Alpine and murder'd Glencoe
Shall shout for revenge when they pour on the foe!

Ye sons of brown Dermid, who slew the wild boar,
Resume the pure faith of the great Callum-More!
Mac-Niel of the Islands, and Moy of the Lake,
For honour, for freedom, for vengeance awake!

Awake on your hills, on your islands awake,
Brave sons of the mountain, the frith, and the lake!
'Tis the bugle—but not for the chase is the call;
'Tis the pibroch's shrill summons—but not to the hall.

'Tis the summons of heroes for conquest or death,
When the banners are blazing on mountain and heath;
They call to the dirk, the claymore, and the targe,
To the march and the muster, the line and the charge.

Be the brand of each chieftain like Fin's in his ire!
May the blood through his veins flow like currents of fire!
Burst the base foreign yoke as your sires did of yore!
Or die, like your sires, and endure it no more![1]

[1] "As Flora concluded her song, Fergus stood before them, and immediately commenced with a theatrical air,"

O Lady of the desert, hail!
That lovest the harping of the Gael,
Through fair and fertile regions borne,
Where never yet grew grass or corn.

"But English poetry will never succeed under the influence of a Highland Helicon—*Allons, courage*"—

O vous, qui buvez à tasse pleine,
A cette heureuse fontaine,
Où on ne voit sur le rivage
Que quelques vilains troupeaux,
Suivis de nymphes de village,
Qui les escortent sans sabots——

(10)—LINES ON CAPTAIN WOGAN

TO AN OAK TREE, IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ——, IN THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND, SAID TO MARK THE GRAVE OF CAPTAIN WOGAN, KILLED IN 1649

Emblem of England's ancient faith,
Full proudly may thy branches wave,
Where loyalty lies low in death,
And valour fills a timeless grave.

And thou, brave tenant of the tomb!
Repine not if our clime deny,
Above thine honour'd sod to bloom,
The flowrets of a milder sky.

These owe their birth to genial May;
Beneath a fiercer sun they pine,
Before the winter storm decay—
And can their worth be type of thine?

No! for, 'mid storms of Fate opposing,
Still higher swell'd thy dauntless heart,
And, while Despair the scene was closing,
Commenced thy brief but brilliant part.

'Twas then thou sought'st on Albyn's hill
(When England's sons the strife resign'd),
A rugged race resisting still,
And unsubdued though unrefined.

Thy death's hour heard no kindred wail,
No holy knell thy requiem rung;
Thy mourners were the plaided Gael,
Thy dirge the clamorous pibroch sung,

Yet who, in Fortune's summer-shine
To waste life's longest term away,
Would change that glorious dawn of thine,
Though darken'd ere its noontide day?

Be thine the Tree whose dauntless boughs
Brave summer's drought and winter's gloom!
Rome bound with oak her patriots' brows,
As Albyn shadows Wogan's tomb.

(11)—" FOLLOW ME, FOLLOW ME '

But follow, follow me,
While glow-worms light the lea,
I'll show ye where the dead should be—
Each in his shroud,
While winds pipe loud,
And the red moon peeps dim through the cloud.

Follow, follow me;
Brave should he be
That treads by the night the dead man's lea."

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY?

" I am not able to give the exact date of the following reply to one of John Ballantyne's expostulations on the subject of *the secret.*"

" No, John, I will not own the book—
I won't, you Piccaroon.
When next I try St. Grubby's brook,
The A. of Wa— shall bait the hook—
And flat-fish bite as soon,
As if before them they had got
The worn-out wriggler
WALTER SCOTT."

FAREWELL TO MACKENZIE

HIGH CHIEF OF KINTAIL

(From the Gaelic)

The original verses are arranged to a beautiful Gaelic air, of which the chorus is adapted to the double pull upon the oars of a galley, and which is therefore distinct from the ordinary jorrams, or boat-songs. They were composed by the Family Bard upon the departure of the Earl of Seaforth, who was obliged to take refuge in Spain, after an unsuccessful effort at insurrection in favour of the Stuart family, in the year 1718.

Farewell to Mackenneth, great Earl of the North,
The Lord of Lochcarron, Glenshiel, and Seaforth;
To the Chieftain this morning his course who began,
Launching forth on the billows his bark like a swan.
For a far foreign land he has hoisted his sail,
Farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail!

O swift be the galley, and hardy her crew,
May her captain be skilful, her mariners true,
In danger undaunted, unwearied by toil,
Though the whirlwind should rise, and the ocean should boil:
On the brave vessel's gunnel I drank his bonail,[1]
And farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail!

Awake in thy chamber, thou sweet southland gale!
Like the sighs of his people, breathe soft on his sail;
Be prolong'd as regret, that his vassals must know,
Be fair as their faith, and sincere as their woe:
Be so soft, and so fair, and so faithful, sweet gale,
Wafting onward Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail!

Be his pilot experienced, and trusty, and wise,
To measure the seas and to study the skies:
May he hoist all his canvas from streamer to deck,
But O! crowd it higher when wafting him back—
Till the cliffs of Skooroora, and Conan's glad vale,
Shall welcome Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail!

1815.

IMITATION OF THE PRECEDING SONG

So sung the old Bard, in the grief of his heart,
When he saw his loved Lord from his people depart.
Now mute on thy mountains, O Albyn, are heard
Nor the voice of the song, nor the harp of the bard;
Or its strings are but waked by the stern winter gale,
As they mourn for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

From the far Southland Border a Minstrel came forth,
And he waited the hour that some Bard of the north
His hand on the harp of the ancient should cast,
And bid its wild numbers mix high with the blast;
But no bard was there left in the land of the Gael,
To lament for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

And shalt thou then sleep, did the Minstrel exclaim,
Like the son of the lowly, unnoticed by fame?
No, son of Fitzgerald! in accents of woe,

[1] Bonail, or Bonallez, the old Scottish phrase for a feast at parting with a friend.

[2] These verses were written shortly after the death of Lord Seaforth, the last male representative of his illustrious house. He was a nobleman of extraordinary talents, who must have made for himself a lasting reputation, had not his political exertions been checked by the painful natural infirmities alluded to in the fourth stanza.

The song thou hast loved o'er thy coffin shall flow,
And teach thy wild mountains to join in the wail
That laments for Mackenzie, last Chief of Kintail.

In vain, the bright course of thy talents to wrong,
Fate deaden'd thine ear and imprison'd thy tongue;
For brighter o'er all her obstructions arose
The glow of the genius they could not oppose;
And who in the land of the Saxon or Gael,
Might match with Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail?

Thy sons rose around thee in light and in love,
All a father could hope, all a friend could approve;
What 'vails it the tale of thy sorrows to tell,—
In the spring-time of youth and of promise they fell!
Of the line of Fitzgerald remains not a male,
To bear the proud name of the Chief of Kintail.

And thou, gentle Dame, who must bear, to thy grief,
For thy clan and thy country the cares of a Chief,
Whom brief rolling moons in six changes have left,
Of thy husband, and father, and brethren bereft,
To thine ear of affection, how sad is the hail,
That salutes thee the Heir of the line of Kintail!

WAR-SONG OF LACHLAN

HIGH CHIEF OF MACLEAN

(*From the Gaelic*)

A weary month has wander'd o'er
Since last we parted on the shore;
Heaven! that I saw thee, Love, once more,
Safe on that shore again!—
'Twas valiant Lachlan gave the word:
Lachlan, of many a galley lord:
He call'd his kindred bands on board,
And launch'd them on the main.

Clan-Gillian is to ocean gone
Clan-Gillian, fierce in foray known;
Rejoicing in the glory won
In many a bloody broil:
For wide is heard the thundering fray,
The rout, the ruin, the dismay,
When from the twilight glens away
Clan-Gillian drives the spoil.

Woe to the hills that shall rebound
Our banner'd bag-pipes' maddening sound;
Clan-Gillian's onset echoing round,
Shall shake their inmost cell.
Woe to the bark whose crew shall gaze,
Where Lachlan's silken streamer plays!
The fools might face the lightning's blaze
As wisely and as well!

1815.

ST. CLOUD

Soft spread the southern summer night
Her veil of darksome blue;
Ten thousand stars combined to light
The terrace of Saint Cloud.

The evening breezes gently sigh'd,
Like breath of lover true,
Bewailing the deserted pride
And wreck of sweet Saint Cloud.

The drum's deep roll was heard afar,
The bugle wildly blew
Good-night to Hulan and Hussar,
That garrison Saint Cloud.

The startled Naiads from the shade
With broken urns withdrew,
And silenced was that proud cascade,
The glory of Saint Cloud.

We sate upon its steps of stone,
Nor could its silence rue,
When waked, to music of our own,
The echoes of Saint Cloud.

Slow Seine might hear each lovely note
Fall light as summer dew,
While through the moonless air they float,
Prolong'd from fair Saint Cloud.

And sure a melody more sweet
His waters never knew,
Though music's self was wont to meet
With Princes at Saint Cloud.

Nor then, with more delighted ear,
The circle round her drew,
Than ours, when gather'd round to hear
Our songstress at Saint Cloud.

Few happy hours poor mortals pass,—
Then give those hours their due,
And rank among the foremost class
Our evenings at Saint Cloud.

Paris, 5th September, 1815.

THE DANCE OF DEATH

I. Night and morning were at meeting
Over Waterloo;
Cocks had sung their earliest greeting;
Faint and low they crew,
For no paly beam yet shone
On the heights of Mount Saint John;
Tempest-clouds prolong'd the sway
Of timeless darkness over day;
Whirlwind, thunder-clap, and shower,
Mark'd it a predestined hour.
Broad and frequent through the night
Flash'd the sheets of levin-light;
Muskets, glancing lightnings back,
Show'd the dreary bivouac
Where the soldier lay,
Chill and stiff, and drench'd with rain,
Wishing dawn of morn again,
Though death should come with day.

II. 'Tis at such a tide and hour,
Wizard, witch, and fiend have power,
And ghastly forms through mist and shower
Gleam on the gifted ken;
And then the affrighted prophet's ear
Drinks whispers strange of fate and fear
Presaging death and ruin near
Among the sons of men;—
Apart from Albyn's war-array,
'Twas then grey Allan sleepless lay;
Grey Allan, who, for many a day,
Had follow'd stout and stern,
Where, through battle's rout and reel,
Storm of shot and hedge of steel,
Led the grandson of Lochiel,
Valiant Fassiefern.

Through steel and shot he leads no more,
Low laid 'mid friends' and foemen's gore—
But long his native lake's wild shore,
And Sunart rough, and high Ardgower,
And Morven long shall tell,
And proud Bennevis hear with awe,
How, upon bloody Quatre-Bras,
Brave Cameron heard the wild hurra
Of conquest as he fell.

III. 'Lone on the outskirts of the host,
The weary sentinel held post,
And heard, through darkness far aloof,
The frequent clang of courser's hoof,
Where held the cloak'd patrol their course,
And spurr'd 'gainst storm the swerving horse.
But there are sounds in Allan's ear,
Patrol nor sentinel may hear,
And sights before his eye aghast
Invisible to them have pass'd,
When down the destined plain,
'Twixt Britain and the bands of France,
Wild as marsh-borne meteor's glance,
Strange phantoms wheel'd a revel dance,
And doom'd the future slain.—
Such forms were seen, such sounds were heard
When Scotland's James his march prepared
For Flodden's fatal plain;
Such, when he drew his ruthless sword,
As Choosers of the Slain, adored
The yet unchristen'd Dane.
An indistinct and phantom band,
They wheel'd their ring-dance hand in hand,
With gestures wild and dread;
The Seer, who watch'd them ride the storm,
Saw through their faint and shadowy form
The lightning's flash more red;
And still their ghastly roundelay
Was of the coming battle-fray,
And of the destined dead.

SONG

IV. "Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Our airy feet,
So light and fleet,
They do not bend the rye
That sinks its head when whirlwinds rave,
And swells again in eddying wave,
As each wild gust blows by;
But still the corn,
At dawn of morn,
Our fatal steps that bore,
At eve lies waste,
A trampled paste
Of blackening mud and gore.

v. "Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Wheel the wild dance!
Brave sons of France,
For you our ring makes room;
Make space full wide
For martial pride,
For banner, spear, and plume.
Approach, draw near,
Proud cuirassier!
Room for the men of steel!
Through crest and plate
The broadsword's weight
Both head and heart shall feel.

vi. "Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Sons of the spear!
You feel us near
In many a ghastly dream;
With fancy's eye
Our forms you spy,
And hear our fatal scream.
With clearer sight
Ere falls the night,
Just when to weal or woe

Your disembodied souls take flight
On trembling wing—each startled sprite
Our choir of death shall know.

VII. "Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Burst, ye clouds, in tempest showers,
Redder rain shall soon be ours—
See the east grows wan—
Yield we place to sterner game,
Ere deadlier bolts and direr flame
Shall the welkin's thunders shame
Elemental rage is tame
To the wrath of man."

VIII. At morn, grey Allan's mates with awe
Heard of the vision'd sights he saw,
The legend heard him say;
But the Seer's gifted eye was dim,
Deafen'd his ear, and stark his limb,
Ere closed that bloody day—
He sleeps far from his Highland heath,—
But often of the Dance of Death
His comrades tell the tale,
On picquet-post, when ebbs the night,
And waning watch-fires glow less bright,
And dawn is glimmering pale.

1815.

ROMANCE OF DUNOIS

(*From the French*)

The original of this little Romance makes part of a manuscript collection of French Songs, probably compiled by some young officer, which was found on the field of Waterloo, so much stained with clay and with blood, as sufficiently to indicate the fate of its late owner. The song is popular in France, and is rather a good specimen of the style of composition to which it belongs. The translation is strictly literal.[1]

It was Dunois, the young and brave, was bound for Palestine,
But first he made his orisons before St. Mary's shrine:

[1] The original romance,

"Partant pour la Syrie,
Le jeune et brave Dunois," etc.

was written, and set to music also, by Hortense Beauharnois, Duchesse de St. Leu, Ex-Queen of Holland.

"And grant, immortal Queen of Heaven," was still the
Soldier's prayer,
"That I may prove the bravest knight, and love the fairest
fair."

His oath of honour on the shrine he graved it with his sword,
And follow'd to the Holy Land the banner of his Lord;
Where, faithful to his noble vow, his war-cry fill'd the air,
"Be honour'd aye the bravest knight, beloved the fairest
fair."

They owed the conquest to his arm, and then his Liege-Lord
said,
"The heart that has for honour beat by bliss must be
repaid.—
My daughter Isabel and thou shall be a wedded pair,
For thou art bravest of the brave, she fairest of the fair."

And then they bound the holy knot before Saint Mary's
shrine,
That makes a paradise on earth, if hearts and hands combine;
And every lord and lady bright, that were in chapel there,
Cried, "Honour'd be the bravest knight, beloved the
fairest fair!"

1815.

THE TROUBADOUR[1]

(*From the same collection*)

Glowing with love, on fire for fame,
A Troubadour that hated sorrow,
Beneath his Lady's window came,
And thus he sung his last good-morrow:
"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my true-love's bower;
Gaily for love and fame to fight
Befits the gallant Troubadour."

And while he march'd with helm on head
And harp in hand, the descant rung,
As, faithful to his favourite maid,
The minstrel-burden still he sung:
"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
Resolved for love and fame to fight,
I come, a gallant Troubadour."

[1] The original was written and composed by the Duchesse de St. Leu.

Even when the battle-roar was deep,
  With dauntless heart he hew'd his way,
'Mid splintering lance and falchion-sweep,
  And still was heard his warrior-lay:
"My life it is my country's right,
  My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love to die, for fame to fight,
  Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

Alas! upon the bloody field
  He fell beneath the foeman's glaive,
But still reclining on his shield,
  Expiring sung the exulting stave:—
"My life it is my country's right,
  My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love and fame to fall in fight
  Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

1815.

FROM THE FRENCH

It chanced that Cupid on a season,
  By Fancy urged, resolved to wed,
But could not settle whether Reason
  Or Folly should partake his bed.

What does he then?—Upon my life,
  'Twas bad example for a deity—
He takes me Reason for a wife,
  And Folly for his hours of gaiety.

Though thus he dealt in petty treason,
  He loved them both in equal measure;
Fidelity was born of Reason,
  And Folly brought to bed of Pleasure.

1815.

SONG

ON THE LIFTING OF THE BANNER OF THE HOUSE OF BUCCLEUCH, AT A GREAT FOOTBALL MATCH ON CARTERHAUGH

From the brown crest of Newark its summons extending,
  Our signal is waving in smoke and in flame;
And each forester blithe, from his mountain descending,
  Bounds light o'er the heather to join in the game.

CHORUS

Then up with the Banner, let forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more ;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before.

When the Southern invader spread waste and disorder,
At the glance of her crescents he paused and withdrew,
For around them were marshall'd the pride of the Border,
The Flowers of the Forest, the Bands of BUCCLEUCH.
Then up with the Banner, etc.

A Stripling's weak hand to our revel has borne her,
No mail-glove has grasp'd her, no spearmen surround;
But ere a bold foeman should scathe or should scorn her,
A thousand true hearts would be cold on the ground.
Then up with the Banner, etc.

We forget each contention of civil dissension,
And hail, like our brethren, HOME, DOUGLAS, and CAR:
And ELLIOT and PRINGLE in pastime shall mingle,
As welcome in peace as their fathers in war.
Then up with the Banner, etc.

Then strip, lads, and to it, though sharp be the weather,
And if, by mischance, you should happen to fall,
There are worse things in life than a tumble on heather,
And life is itself but a game at foot-ball.
Then up with the Banner, etc.

And when it is over, we'll drink a blithe measure
To each Laird and each Lady that witness'd our fun,
And to every blithe heart that took part in our pleasure,
To the lads that have lost and the lads that have won.
Then up with the Banner, etc.

May the Forest still flourish, both Borough and Landward,
From the hall of the Peer to the Herd's ingle-nook;
And huzza! my brave hearts, for BUCCLEUCH and his standard,
For the King and the Country, the Clan, and the Duke!

Then up with the Banner, let forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more ;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before.

1815.

LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF

AIR—"*Cadul gu lo*"

I. O, hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers which we see,
They all are belonging, dear babie, to thee.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

II. O, fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy bed.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

III. O, hush thee, my babie, the time soon will come,
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and drum;
Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and waking with day.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

1815.

VERSES FROM "GUY MANNERING"

(1)—SONGS OF MEG MERRILIES

NATIVITY OF HARRY BERTRAM

Canny moment, lucky fit;
Is the lady lighter yet?
Be it lad, or be it lass,
Sign wi' cross, and sain wi' mass.

Trefoil, vervain, John's-wort, dill,
Hinders witches of their will;
Weel is them, that weel may
Fast upon St. Andrew's day.

Saint Bride and her brat
Saint Colme and her cat,
Saint Michael and his spear,
Keep the house frae reif and wear.

"TWIST YE, TWINE YE"

Twist ye, twine ye! even so,
Mingle shades of joy and woe,
Hope, and fear, and peace, and strife,
In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,
And the infant's life beginning,
Dimly seen through twilight bending,
Lo, what varied shapes attending!

Passions wild, and follies vain,
Pleasures soon exchanged for pain;
Doubt, and jealousy, and fear,
In the magic dance appear.

Now they wax, and now they dwindle,
Whirling with the whirling spindle.
Twist ye, twine ye! even so,
Mingle human bliss and woe.

THE DYING GIPSY SMUGGLER

Wasted, weary, wherefore stay,
Wrestling thus with earth and clay?
From the body pass away:—
Hark! the mass is singing.

From thee doff thy mortal weed,
Mary Mother be thy speed,
Saints to help thee at thy need;—
Hark! the knell is ringing.

Fear not snow-drift driving fast,
Sleet, or hail, or levin blast;
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,
And the sleep be on thee cast
That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone,
Earth flits fast, and time draws on,—
Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy groan,
Day is near the breaking.

THE PROPHECY

The dark shall be light,
And the wrong made right,
When Bertram's right and Bertram's might
Shall meet on Ellangowan's height.

(2)—SONGS OF DIRK HATTERAICK AND GLOSSIN

I. Saufen bier, und brante-wein,
Schmeissen alle die fenstern ein;
Ich ben liederlich,
Du bist liederlich,
Sind wir nicht liederlich leute a.

II. Gin by pailfuls, wine in rivers,
Dash the window-glass to shivers
For three wild lads were we, brave boys,
And three wild lads were we;
Thou on the land, and I on the sand,
And Jack on the gallows-tree!

1815.

THE RETURN TO ULSTER

Once again,—but how changed since my wand'rings began—
I have heard the deep voice of the Lagan and Bann,
And the pines of Clanbrassil resound to the roar
That wearies the echoes of fair Tullamore.
Alas! my poor bosom, and why shouldst thou burn?
With the scenes of my youth can its raptures return!
Can I live the dear life of delusion again,
That flow'd when these echoes first mix'd with my strain?

It was then that around me, though poor and unknown,
High spells of mysterious enchantment were thrown;
The streams were of silver, of diamond the dew,
The land was an Eden, for fancy was new.
I had heard of our bards, and my soul was on fire
At the rush of their verse, and the sweep of their lyre:
To me 'twas not legend, nor tale to the ear,
But a vision of noontide, distinguish'd and clear.

Ultonia's old heroes awoke at the call,
And renew'd the wild pomp of the chase and the hall;
And the standard of Fion flash'd fierce from on high,
Like a burst of the sun when the tempest is nigh.[1]
It seem'd that the harp of green Erin once more
Could renew all the glories she boasted of yore.—
Yet why at remembrance, fond heart, shouldst thou burn?
They were days of delusion, and cannot return.

[1] In ancient Irish poetry, the standard of Fion, or Fingal, is called the *Sun-burst*, an epithet feebly rendered by the *Sunbeam* of Macpherson.

But was she, too, a phantom, the Maid who stood by,
And listed my lay, while she turn'd from mine eye?
Was she, too, a vision, just glancing to view,
Then dispersed in the sunbeam, or melted to dew?
Oh! would it had been so,—Oh! would that her eye
Had been but a star-glance that shot through the sky,
And her voice that was moulded to melody's thrill,
Had been but a zephyr, that sigh'd and was still!

Oh! would it had been so,—not then this poor heart
Had learn'd the sad lesson, to love and to part;
To bear, unassisted, its burthen of care,
While I toil'd for the wealth I had no one to share.
Not then had I said, when life's summer was done,
And the hours of her autumn were fast speeding on,
"Take the fame and the riches ye brought in your train,
And restore me the dream of my spring-tide again."

1816.

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN[1]

AIR—*A Border Melody*

I. "Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

II. "Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

III. "A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;

[1] The first stanza of this Ballad is ancient.

And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen "—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

IV. The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmer'd fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

1816.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

AIR—"*Piobair of Donuil Dhuidh*"[1]

This is a very ancient pibroch belonging to Clan MacDonald, and supposed to refer to the expedition of Donald Balloch, who, in 1431, launched from the Isles with a considerable force, invaded Lochaber, and at Inverlochy defeated and put to flight the Earls of Mar and Caithness, though at the head of an army superior to his own. The words of the set, theme, or melody, to which the pipe variations are applied, run thus in Gaelic:—

Piobaireachd Dhonuil Dhuidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piobaireachd Dhonuil Dhuidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piobaireachd Dhonuil Dhuidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piob agus bratach air faiche Inverlochi.
The pipe-summons of Donald the Black,
The pipe-summons of Donald the Black,
The war-pipe and the pennon are on the gathering-place at Inverlochy.

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan-Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

[1] "The pibroch of Donald the Black."

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterr'd,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended,
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

1816.

NORA'S VOW

AIR—"*Cha teid mis a chaoidh*" [1]

In the original Gaelic, the Lady makes protestations that she will not go with the Red Earl's son, until the swan should build in the cliff, and the eagle in the lake—until one mountain should change places with another, and so forth. It is but fair to add, that there is no authority for supposing that she altered her mind—except the vehemence of her protestation.

1. Hear what Highland Nora said,—
"The Earlie's son I will not wed,
Should all the race of nature die,
And none be left but he and I.
For all the gold, for all the gear,
And all the lands both far and near,
That ever valour lost or won,
I would not wed the Earlie's son."—

[1] "I will never go with him."

II. " A maiden's vows," old Callum spoke,
" Are lightly made and lightly broke;
The heather on the mountain's height
Begins to bloom in purple light;
The frost-wind soon shall sweep away
That lustre deep from glen and brae;
Yet Nora, ere its bloom be gone,
May blithely wed the Earlie's son."—

III. " The swan," she said, " the lake's clear breast
May barter for the eagle's nest;
The Awe's fierce stream may backward turn,
Ben-Cruaichan fall, and crush Kilchurn;
Our kilted clans, when blood is high,
Before their foes may turn and fly;
But I, were all these marvels done,
Would never wed the Earlie's son."

IV. Still in the water-lily's shade
Her wonted nest the wild-swan made;
Ben-Cruaichan stands as fast as ever,
Still downward foams the Awe's fierce river;
To shun the clash of foeman's steel,
No Highland brogue has turn'd the heel;
But Nora's heart is lost and won,
—She's wedded to the Earlie's son!

1816.

MACGREGOR'S GATHERING

AIR—" *Thain' a Grigalach* " [1]

These verses are adapted to a very wild, yet lively gathering-tune, used by the MacGregors. The severe treatment of this Clan, their outlawry, and the proscription of their very name, are alluded in to the Ballad.

The moon's on the lake, and the mist's on the brae,
And the Clan has a name that is nameless by day;
Then gather, gather, gather Grigalach!
Gather, gather, gather, etc.

Our signal for fight, that from monarchs we drew,
Must be heard but by night in our vengeful haloo!
Then haloo, Grigalach! haloo, Grigalach!
Haloo, haloo, haloo, Grigalach, etc.

[1] " The MacGregor is come."

Glen Orchy's proud mountains, Coalchuirn and her towers,
Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer are ours;
We're landless, landless, landless, Grigalach!
Landless, landless, landless, etc.

But doom'd and devoted by vassal and lord,
MacGregor has still both his heart and his sword!
Then courage, courage, courage, Grigalach!
Courage, courage, courage, etc.

If they rob us of name, and pursue us with beagles,
Give their roofs to the flame, and their flesh to the eagles!
Then vengeance, vengeance, vengeance, Grigalach!
Vengeance, vengeance, vengeance, etc.

While there's leaves in the forest, and foam on the river,
MacGregor, despite them, shall flourish for ever!
Come then, Grigalach, come then, Grigalach!
Come then, come then, come then, etc.

Through the depths of Loch Katrine the steed shall career,
O'er the peak of Ben-Lomond the galley shall steer,
And the rocks of Craig-Royston like icicles melt,
Ere our wrongs be forgot, or our vengeance unfelt!
Then gather, gather, gather, Grigalach!
Gather, gather, gather, etc.

1816.

VERSES,

COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION, ADAPTED TO HAYDN'S AIR,

"God Save the Emperor Francis,"

AND SUNG BY A SELECT BAND AFTER THE DINNER GIVEN BY THE LORD PROVOST OF EDINBURGH TO THE GRAND-DUKE NICHOLAS OF RUSSIA, AND HIS SUITE, 19TH DECEMBER, 1816.

God protect brave Alexander,
Heaven defend the noble Czar,
Mighty Russia's high Commander,
First in Europe's banded war;
For the realms he did deliver
From the tyrant overthrown,
Thou, of every good the Giver,
Grant him long to bless his own!
Bless him, 'mid his land's disaster,
For her rights who battled brave,
Of the land of foemen master,
Bless him who their wrongs forgave.

O'er his just resentment victor,
Victor over Europe's foes,
Late and long supreme director,
Grant in peace his reign may close.
Hail! then, hail! illustrious stranger!
Welcome to our mountain strand;
Mutual interests, hopes, and danger,
Link us with thy native land.
Freemen's force, or false beguiling,
Shall that union ne'er divide,
Hand in hand while peace is smiling,
And in battle side by side.

FROM "THE ANTIQUARY"

(1)—TIME

"Why sit'st thou by that ruin'd hall,
Thou aged carle so stern and grey?
Dost thou its former pride recall,
Or ponder how it pass'd away?"—

"Know'st thou not me?" the Deep Voice cried;
"So long enjoy'd, so oft misused—
Alternate, in thy fickle pride,
Desired, neglected, and accused!

"Before my breath, like blazing flax,
Man and his marvels pass away!
And changing empires wane and wax,
Are founded, flourish, and decay.

"Redeem mine hours—the space is brief—
While in my glass the sand-grains shiver,
And measureless thy joy or grief,
When TIME and thou shalt part for ever!"

(2)—EPITAPH ON JON O' YE GIRNELL

Heir lyeth Jōn o' ye Girnell.
Erth has ye nit and heuen ye kirnell.
In hys tyme ilk wyfe's hennis clokit,
Ilka gud mannis herth wi' bairnis was stokit,
He deled a boll o' bear in firlottis fyve,
Four for ye halie kirke and ane for pure mennis wyvis.

(3)—ELSPETH'S BALLAD

The herring loves the merry moon-light,
The mackerel loves the wind,
But the oyster loves the dredging sang,
For they come of a gentle kind.

Now haud your tongue, baith wife and carle,
And listen great and sma',
And I will sing of Glenallan's Earl
That fought on the red Harlaw.

The cronach's cried on Bennachie,
And doun the Don and a',
And hieland and lawland may mournfu' be
For the sair field of Harlaw.——

They saddled a hundred milk-white steeds,
They hae bridled a hundred black,
With a chafron of steel on each horse's head,
And a good knight upon his back.

They hadna ridden a mile, a mile,
A mile, but barely ten,
When Donald came branking down the brae
Wi' twenty thousand men.

Their tartans they were waving wide,
Their glaives were glancing clear,
The pibrochs rung frae side to side,
Would deafen ye to hear.

The great Earl in his stirrups stood,
That Highland host to see:
"Now here a knight that's stout and good
May prove a jeopardie:

"What would'st thou do, my squire so gay,
That rides beside my reyne,—
Were ye Glenallan's Earl the day,
And I were Roland Cheyne?

"To turn the rein were sin and shame,
To fight were wond'rous peril,—
What would ye do now, Roland Cheyne,
Were ye Glenallan's Earl?"—

"Were I Glenallan's Earl this tide,
And ye were Roland Cheyne,
The spear should be in my horse's side,
And the bridle upon his mane.

"If they hae twenty thousand blades,
And we twice ten times ten,
Yet they hae but their tartan plaids,
And we are mail-clad men.

"My horse shall ride through ranks sae rude,
As through the moorland fern,—
Then ne'er let the gentle Norman blude
Grow cauld for Highland kerne."

. . . . .

He turn'd him right and round again,
Said, Scorn na at my mither;
Light loves I may get mony a ane,
But minnie ne'er anither.

1816.

FROM "OLD MORTALITY"

(1)—MAJOR BELLENDEN'S SONG

And what though winter will pinch severe
Through locks of grey and a cloak that's old,
Yet keep up thy heart, bold cavalier,
For a cup of sack shall fence the cold.

For time will rust the brightest blade,
And years will break the strongest bow;
Was never wight so starkly made,
But time and years would overthrow?

(2)—VERSES FOUND IN BOTHWELL'S POCKET-BOOK

Thy hue, dear pledge, is pure and bright,
As in that well-remember'd night,
When first thy mystic braid was wove,
And first my Agnes whisper'd love.

Since then how often hast thou press'd
The torrid zone of this wild breast,
Whose wrath and hate have sworn to dwell
With the first sin which peopled hell,
A breast whose blood's a troubled ocean,

Each throb the earthquake's wild commotion!—
O, if such clime thou canst endure,
Yet keep thy hue unstain'd and pure,
What conquest o'er each erring thought
Of that fierce realm had Agnes wrought!
I had not wander'd wild and wide,
With such an angel for my guide;
Nor heaven nor earth could then reprove me,
If she had lived, and lived to love me.

Not then this world's wild joys had been
To me one savage hunting scene,
My sole delight the headlong race,
And frantic hurry of the chase;
To start, pursue, and bring to bay,
Rush in, drag down, and rend my prey,
Then—from the carcass turn away!
Mine ireful mood had sweetness tamed,
And soothed each wound which pride inflamed!
Yes, God and man might now approve me,
If thou hadst lived, and lived to love me.

(3)—EPITAPH ON BALFOUR OF BURLEY

Here lyes ane saint to prelates surly,
Being John Balfour, sometime of Burley,
Who, stirred up to vengeance take,
For Solemn League and Cov'nant's sake,
Upon the Magus-Moor, in Fife,
Did tak' James Sharpe the apostate's life;
By Dutchman's hands was hacked and shot,
Then drowned in Clyde near this saam spot.

1816.

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS

OR,

THE QUEST OF SULTAUN SOLIMAUN

1. Oh for a glance of that gay Muse's eye,
That lighten'd on Bandello's laughing tale,
And twinkled with a lustre shrewd and sly,
When Giam Battista bade her vision hail!—
Yet fear not, ladies, the *naive* detail
Given by the natives of that land canorous;
Italian license loves to leap the pale,
We Britons have the fear of shame before us,
And, if not wise in mirth, at least must be decorous.

II. In the far eastern clime, no great while since,
Lived Sultaun Solimaun, a mighty prince,
Whose eyes, as oft as they perform'd their round,
Beheld all others fix'd upon the ground;
Whose ears received the same unvaried phrase,
"Sultaun! thy vassal hears, and he obeys!"
All have their tastes—this may the fancy strike
Of such grave folks as pomp and grandeur like;
For me, I love the honest heart and warm
Of Monarch who can amble round his farm,
Or, when the toil of state no more annoys,
In chimney corner seek domestic joys—
I love a prince will bid the bottle pass,
Exchanging with his subjects glance and glass;
In fitting time, can, gayest of the gay,
Keep up the jest, and mingle in the lay—
Such Monarchs best our free-born humours suit,
But Despots must be stately, stern, and mute.

III. This Solimaun, Serendib had in sway—
And where's Serendib? may some critic say.—
Good lack, mine honest friend, consult the chart,
Scare not my Pegasus before I start!
If Rennell has it not, you'll find, mayhap,
The isle laid down in Captain Sindbad's map,—
Famed mariner! whose merciless narrations
Drove every friend and kinsman out of patience,
Till, fain to find a guest who thought them shorter
He deign'd to tell them over to a porter—
The last edition see, by Long. and Co.,
Rees, Hurst, and Orme, our fathers in the Row.

IV. Serendib found, deem not my tale a fiction—
This Sultaun, whether lacking contradiction—
(A sort of stimulant which hath its uses,
To raise the spirits and reform the juices,
—Sovereign specific for all sorts of cures
In my wife's practice, and perhaps in yours,)
The Sultaun lacking this same wholesome bitter,
Or cordial smooth for prince's palate fitter—
Or if some Mollah had hag-rid his dreams
With Degial, Ginnistan, and such wild themes
Belonging to the Mollah's subtle craft,
I wot not—but the Sultaun never laugh'd,
Scarce ate or drank, and took a melancholy
That scorn'd all remedy—profane or holy;
In his long list of melancholies, mad,
Or mazed, or dumb, hath Burton none so bad.

v. Physicians soon arrived, sage, ware, and tried,
As e'er scrawl'd jargon in a darken'd room;
With heedful glance the Sultaun's tongue they eyed,
Peep'd in his bath, and God knows where beside,
And then in solemn accent spoke their doom,
"His majesty is very far from well."
Then each to work with his specific fell:
The Hakim Ibrahim *instanter* brought
His unguent Mahazzim al Zerdukkaut,
While Roompot, a practitioner more wily,
Relied on his Munaskif al fillfily.
More and yet more in deep array appear,
And some the front assail, and some the rear;
Their remedies to reinforce and vary,
Came surgeon eke, and eke apothecary;
Till the tired Monarch, though of words grown chary,
Yet dropt, to recompense their fruitless labour,
Some hint about a bowstring or a sabre.
There lack'd, I promise you, no longer speeches
To rid the palace of those learned leeches.

vi. Then was the council call'd—by their advice,
(They deem'd the matter ticklish all, and nice,
And sought to shift it off from their own shoulders,)
Tartars and couriers in all speed were sent,
To call a sort of Eastern Parliament
Of feudatory chieftains and freeholders—
Such have the Persians at this very day,
My gallant Malcolm calls them *couroultai*;—
I'm not prepared to show in this slight song
That to Serendib the same forms belong,—
E'en let the learn'd go search, and tell me if I'm wrong.

vii. The Omrahs, each with hand on scymitar,
Gave, like Sempronius, still their voice for war—
"The sabre of the Sultaun in its sheath
Too long has slept, nor own'd the work of death;
Let the Tambourgi bid his signal rattle,
Bang the loud gong, and raise the shout of battle!
This dreary cloud that dims our sovereign's day,
Shall from his kindled bosom flit away,
When the bold Lootie wheels his courser round,
And the arm'd elephant shall shake the ground.
Each noble pants to own the glorious summons—
And for the charges—Lo! your faithful Commons!"
The Riots who attended in their places
(Serendib language calls a farmer Riot)

Look'd ruefully in one another's faces,
From this oration auguring much disquiet,
Double assessment, forage, and free quarters,
And fearing these as China-men the Tartars.
Or as the whisker'd vermin fear the mousers,
Each fumbled in the pocket of his trowsers.

VIII. And next came forth the reverend Convocation,
Bald heads, white beards, and many a turban green,
Imaum and Mollah there of every station,
Santon, Fakir, and Calendar were seen.
Their votes were various—some advised a Mosque
With fitting revenues should be erected,
With seemly gardens and with gay Kiosque,
To recreate a band of priests selected;
Others opined that through the realms a dole
Be made to holy men, whose prayers might profit
The Sultaun's weal in body and in soul.
But their long-headed chief, the Sheik Ul-Sofit,
More closely touch'd the point:—"Thy studious mood,"
Quoth he, "O Prince! hath thicken'd all thy blood,
And dull'd thy brain with labour beyond measure;
Wherefore relax a space and take thy pleasure,
And toy with beauty, or tell o'er thy treasure;
From all the cares of state, my Liege, enlarge thee,
And leave the burden to thy faithful clergy."

IX. These counsels sage availed not a whit,
And so the patient (as is not uncommon
Where grave physicians lose their time and wit)
Resolved to take advice of an old woman;
His mother she, a dame who once was beauteous,
And still was called so by each subject duteous.
Now, whether Fatima was witch in earnest,
Or only made believe, I cannot say—
But she profess'd to cure disease the sternest,
By dint of magic amulet or lay;
And, when all other skill in vain was shown,
She deem'd it fitting time to use her own.

X. "*Sympathia magica* hath wonders done,"
(Thus did old Fatima bespeak her son,)
"It works upon the fibres and the pores,
And thus, insensibly, our health restores,
And it must help us here.—Thou must endure
The ill, my son, or travel for the cure.
Search land and sea, and get, where'er you can,
The inmost vesture of a happy man,

I mean his SHIRT, my son; which, taken warm
And fresh from off his back, shall chase your harm,
Bid every current of your veins rejoice,
And your dull heart leap light as shepherd-boy's."
Such was the counsel from his mother came;—
I know not if she had some under-game,
As Doctors have, who bid their patients roam
And live abroad, when sure to die at home;
Or if she thought, that, somehow or another,
Queen-Regent sounded better than Queen-Mother;
But, says the Chronicle (who will go look it),
That such was her advice—the Sultaun took it.

XI. All are on board—the Sultaun and his train,
In gilded galley prompt to plough the main.
The old Rais was the first who questioned,
"Whither?"
They paused—"Arabia," thought the pensive Prince,
"Was call'd The Happy many ages since—
For Mokha, Rais."—And they came safely thither.
But not in Araby, with all her balm,
Not where Judea weeps beneath her palm,
Not in rich Egypt, not in Nubian waste,
Could there the step of happiness be traced.
One Copt alone profess'd to have seen her smile,
When Bruce his goblet fill'd at infant Nile:
She bless'd the dauntless traveller as he quaff'd,
But vanish'd from him with the ended draught.

XII. "Enough of turbans," said the weary King,
"These dolimans of ours are not the thing;
Try we the Giaours, these men of coat and cap, I
Incline to think some of them must be happy;
At least, they have as fair a cause as any can,
They drink good wine and keep no Ramazan.
Then, northward, ho!"—The vessel cuts the sea,
And fair Italia lies upon her lee.—
But fair Italia, she who once unfurl'd
Her eagle banners o'er a conquer'd world,
Long from her throne of domination tumbled,
Lay, by her quondam vassals, sorely humbled;
The Pope himself look'd pensive, pale, and lean,
And was not half the man he once had been.
"While these the priest and those the noble fleeces,
Our poor old boot," they said, "is torn to pieces.
Its tops the vengeful claws of Austria feel,
And the Great Devil is rending toe and heel.
If happiness you seek, to tell you truly,

We think she dwells with one Giovanni Bulli;
A tramontane, a heretic,—the buck,
Poffaredio! still has all the luck;
By land or ocean never strikes his flag—
And then—a perfect walking money-bag."
Off set our Prince to seek John Bull's abode,
But first took France—it lay upon the road.

XIII. Monsieur Baboon, after much late commotion,
Was agitated like a settling ocean,
Quite out of sorts, and could not tell what ail'd him,
Only the glory of his house had fail'd him;
Besides, some tumours on his noddle biding,
Gave indication of a recent hiding.
Our Prince, though Sultauns of such things are heedless,
Thought it a thing indelicate and needless
To ask, if at that moment he was happy.
And Monsieur, seeing that he was *comme il faut*, a
Loud voice mustered up, for "*Vive le Roi!*"
Then whispered, "Ave you any news of Nappy?"
The Sultaun answer'd him with a cross question,—
"Pray, can you tell me aught of one John Bull,
That dwells somewhere beyond your herring-pool?"
The query seem'd of difficult digestion,
The party shrugg'd, and grinn'd, and took his snuff.
And found his whole good-breeding scarce enough.

XIV. Twitching his visage into as many puckers
As damsels wont to put into their tuckers,
(Ere liberal Fashion damn'd both lace and lawn,
And bade the veil of modesty be drawn,)
Replied the Frenchman, after a brief pause,
"Jean Bool!—I vas not know him—Yes, I vas—
I vas remember dat, von year or two,
I saw him at von place call'd Vaterloo—
Ma foi! il s'est tres joliment battu,
Dat is for Englishman,—m'entendez-vous?
But den he had wit him one damn son-gun,
Rogue I no like—dey call him Vellington."
Monsieur's politeness could not hide his fret,
So Solimaun took leave, and cross'd the strait.

XV. John Bull was in his very worst of moods,
Raving of sterile farms and unsold goods;
His sugar-loaves and bales about he threw,
And on his counter beat the devil's tattoo.
His wars were ended, and the victory won,

But then, 'twas reckoning day with honest John,
And authors vouch, 'twas still this Worthy's way,
" Never to grumble till he came to pay;
And then he always thinks, his temper's such,
The work too little, and the pay too much."
Yet, grumbler as he is, so kind and hearty,
That when his mortal foe was on the floor,
And past the power to harm his quiet more,
Poor John had well-nigh wept for Bonaparte!
Such was the wight whom Solimaun salam'd,—
" And who are you," John answer'd, " and be d—d ? "

XVI. " A stranger, come to see the happiest man,—
So, signior, all avouch,—in Frangistan."—
" Happy! my tenants breaking on my hand;
Unstock'd my pastures, and untill'd my land;
Sugar and rum a drug, and mice and moths
The sole consumers of my good broadcloths—
Happy?—Why, cursed war and racking tax
Have left us scarcely raiment to our backs."—
" In that case, signior, I may take my leave;
I came to ask a favour—but I grieve "——
" Favour? " said John, and eyed the Sultaun hard,
" It's my belief you come to break the yard!—
But, stay, you look like some poor foreign sinner,—
Take that to buy yourself a shirt and dinner."—
With that he chuck'd a guinea at his head;
But, with due dignity, the Sultaun said,
" Permit me, sir, your bounty to decline;
A *shirt* indeed I seek, but none of thine.
Signior, I kiss your hands, so fare you well."—
" Kiss and be d—d," quoth John, " and go to hell! "

XVII. Next door to John there dwelt his sister Peg,
Once a wild lass as ever shook a leg
When the blithe bagpipe blew—but, soberer now,
She *doucely* span her flax and milk'd her cow.
And whereas erst she was a needy slattern,
Nor now of wealth or cleanliness a pattern,
Yet once a-month her house was partly swept,
And once a-week a plenteous board she kept.
And whereas, eke, the vixen used her claws
And teeth, of yore, on slender provocation,
She now was grown amenable to laws,
A quiet soul as any in the nation;
The sole remembrance of her warlike joys
Was in old songs she sang to please her boys.
John Bull, whom, in their years of early strife,
She wont to lead a cat-and-doggish life,

Now found the woman, as he said, a neighbour,
Who look'd to the main chance, declined no labour,
Loved a long grace, and spoke a northern jargon,
And was d—d close in making of a bargain.

XVIII. The Sultaun enter'd, and he made his leg,
And with decorum curtsy'd sister Peg;
(She loved a book, and knew a thing or two,
And guess'd at once with whom she had to do.)
She bade him "Sit into the fire," and took
Her dram, her cake, her kebbuck from the nook;
Ask'd him "about the news from Eastern parts;
And of her absent bairns, puir Highland hearts!
If peace brought down the price of tea and pepper,
And if the *nitmugs* were grown *ony* cheaper;—
Were there nae *speerings* of our Mungo Park—
Ye'll be the gentleman that wants the sark?
If ye wad buy a web o' auld wife's spinnin',
I'll warrant ye it's a weel-wearing linen."

XIX. Then up got Peg, and round the house 'gan scuttle
In search of goods her customer to nail,
Until the Sultaun strain'd his princely throttle,
And hollo'd.—"Ma'am, that is not what I ail.
Pray, are you happy, ma'am, in this snug glen?"—
"Happy?" said Peg; "What for d'ye want to ken?
Besides, just think upon this by-gane year,
Grain wadna pay the yoking of the pleugh."—
"What say you to the present?"—"Meal's sae dear,
To mak' their *brose* my bairns have scarce aneugh."—
"The devil take the shirt," said Solimaun,
"I think my quest will end as it began.—
Farewell, ma'am; nay, no ceremony, I beg"——
"Ye'll no be for the linen then?" said Peg.

XX. Now, for the land of verdant Erin,
The Sultaun's royal bark is steering,
The Emerald Isle, where honest Paddy dwells,
The cousin of John Bull, as story tells.
For a long space had John, with words of thunder,
Hard looks, and harder knocks, kept Paddy under,
Till the poor lad, like boy that's flogg'd unduly,
Had gotten somewhat restive and unruly.
Hard was his lot and lodging, you'll allow,
A wigwam that would hardly serve a sow;
His landlord, and of middle-men two brace,
Had screw'd his rent up to the starving-place;
His garment was a top-coat, and an old one,

His meal was a potato, and a cold one;
But still for fun or frolic, and all that,
In the round world was not the match of Pat.

XXI. The Sultaun saw him on a holiday,
Which is with Paddy still a jolly day:
When mass is ended, and his load of sins
Confess'd, and Mother Church hath from her binns
Dealt forth a bonus of imputed merit,
Then is Pat's time for fancy, whim, and spirit!
To jest, to sing, to caper fair and free,
And dance as light as leaf upon the tree.
"By Mahomet," said Sultaun Solimaun,
"That ragged fellow is our very man!
Rush in and seize him—do not do him hurt,
But, will he nill he, let me have his *shirt*."—

XXII. Shilela their plan was well-nigh after baulking,
(Much less provocation will set it a-walking,)
But the odds that foil'd Hercules foil'd Paddy Whack;
They seized, and they floor'd, and they stripp'd him —Alack!
Up-bubboo! Paddy had not——a shirt to his back!!!
And the King, disappointed, with sorrow and shame,
Went back to Serendib as sad as he came.

1817.

MR. KEMBLE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS,

ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE EDINBURGH STAGE

As the worn war-horse, at the trumpet's sound,
Erects his mane, and neighs, and paws the ground—
Disdains the ease his generous lord assigns,
And longs to rush on the embattled lines,
So I, your plaudits ringing on mine ear,
Can scarce sustain to think our parting near;
To think my scenic hour for ever past,
And that these valued plaudits are my last.
Why should we part, while still some powers remain,
That in your service strive not yet in vain?
Cannot high zeal the strength of youth supply,
And sense of duty fire the fading eye;
And all the wrongs of age remain subdued
Beneath the burning glow of gratitude?

Ah, no! the taper, wearing to its close,
Oft for a space in fitful lustre glows;
But all too soon the transient gleam is past,
It cannot be renew'd, and will not last;
Even duty, zeal, and gratitude, can wage
But short-lived conflict with the frosts of age.
Yes! It were poor, remembering what I was,
To live a pensioner on your applause,
To drain the dregs of your endurance dry,
And take, as alms, the praise I once could buy;
Till every sneering youth around enquires,
"Is this the man who once could please our sires?"
And scorn assumes compassion's doubtful mien,
To warn me off from the encumber'd scene.
This must not be;—and higher duties crave,
Some space between the theatre and the grave,
That, like the Roman in the Capitol,
I may adjust my mantle ere I fall:
My life's brief act in public service flown,
The last, the closing scene, must be my own.

Here, then, adieu! while yet some well-graced parts
May fix an ancient favourite in your hearts,
Not quite to be forgotten, even when
You look on better actors, younger men:
And if your bosoms own this kindly debt
Of old remembrance, how shall mine forget—
O, how forget!—how oft I hither came
In anxious hope, how oft return'd with fame!
How oft around your circle this weak hand
Has waved immortal Shakespeare's magic wand,
Till the full burst of inspiration came,
And I have felt, and you have fann'd the flame!
By mem'ry treasured, while her reign endures,
Those hours must live—and all their charms are yours.

O favour'd Land! renown'd for arts and arms,
For manly talent, and for female charms,
Could this full bosom prompt the sinking line,
What fervent benedictions now were thine!
But my last part is play'd, my knell is rung,
When e'en your praise falls faltering from my tongue;
And all that you can hear, or I can tell,
Is Friends and Patrons, hail, and FARE YOU WELL.

1817.

LINES WRITTEN FOR MISS SMITH

When the lone pilgrim views afar
The shrine that is his guiding star,
With awe his footsteps print the road
Which the loved saint of yore has trod.
As near he draws, and yet more near,
His dim eye sparkles with a tear;
The Gothic fane's unwonted show,
The choral hymn, the tapers' glow,
Oppress his soul; while they delight
And chasten rapture with affright.
No longer dare he think his toil
Can merit aught his patron's smile;
Too light appears the distant way,
The chilly eve, the sultry day—
All these endured no favour claim,
But murmuring forth the sainted name,
He lays his little offering down,
And only deprecates a frown.

We too, who ply the Thespian art,
Oft feel such bodings of the heart,
And, when our utmost powers are strain'd,
Dare hardly hope your favour gain'd.
She, who from sister climes has sought
The ancient land where Wallace fought;—
Land long renown'd for arms and arts,
And conquering eyes and dauntless hearts;—
She, as the flutterings *here* avow,
Feels all the pilgrim's terrors *now*;
Yet sure on Caledonian plain
The stranger never sued in vain.
'Tis yours the hospitable task
To give the applause she dare not ask;
And they who bid the pilgrim speed,
The pilgrim's blessing be their meed.

1817.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL

AIR—"*Rimhin aluin 'stu mo run.*"

The air, composed by the Editor of Albyn's Anthology. The words written for Mr. George Thomson's Scottish Melodies [1822].

The sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill,
In Ettrick's vale, is sinking sweet;
The westland wind is hush and still,
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore;
Though evening, with her richest dye,
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

With listless look along the plain,
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree,—
Are they still such as once they were?
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas, the warp'd and broken board,
How can it bear the painter's dye!
The harp of strain'd and tuneless chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply!
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland hill.

1817.

THE MONKS OF BANGOR'S MARCH

ETHELFRID or OLFRID, King of Northumberland, having besieged Chester in 613, and BROCKMAEL, a British Prince, advancing to relieve it, the religious of the neighbouring Monastery of Bangor marched in procession, to pray for the success of their countrymen. But the British being totally defeated, the heathen victor put the monks to the sword, and destroyed their monastery. The tune to which these verses are adapted is called the Monks' March, and is supposed to have been played at their ill-omened procession.

When the heathen trumpet's clang
Round beleaguer'd Chester rang,
Veiled nun and friar grey
March'd from Bangor's fair Abbaye;

High their holy anthem sounds,
Cestria's vale the hymn rebounds,
Floating down the silvan Dee,
O miserere, Domine !

On the long procession goes,
Glory round their crosses glows,
And the Virgin-mother mild
In their peaceful banner smiled;
Who could think such saintly band
Doom'd to feel unhallow'd hand?
Such was the Divine decree,
O miserere, Domine !

Bands that masses only sung,
Hands that censers only swung,
Met the northern bow and bill,
Heard the war-cry wild and shrill:
Woe to Brockmael's feeble hand,
Woe to Olfrid's bloody brand,
Woe to Saxon cruelty,
O miserere, Domine !

Weltering amid warriors slain,
Spurn'd by steeds with bloody mane,
Slaughter'd down by heathen blade,
Bangor's peaceful monks are laid:
Word of parting rest unspoke,
Mass unsung, and bread unbroke;
For their souls for charity,
Sing, O miserere, Domine !

Bangor! o'er the murder wail!
Long thy ruins told the tale,
Shatter'd towers and broken arch
Long recall'd the woeful march;[1]
On thy shrine no tapers burn,
Never shall thy priests return;
The pilgrim sighs and sings for thee,
O miserere, Domine !

1817.

[1] William of Malmsbury says, that in his time the extent of the ruins of the monastery bore ample witness to the desolation occasioned by the massacre:—"tot semiruti parietes ecclesiarum, tot anfractus porticum, tanta turba ruderum quantum vix alibi cernas."

LETTER TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, DRUMLANRIG CASTLE

SANQUHAR, 2 o'clock, *July* 30, 1817.

From Ross, where the clouds on Benlomond are sleeping –
From Greenock, where Clyde to the Ocean is sweeping—
From Largs, where the Scotch gave the Northmen a drilling—
From Ardrossan, whose harbour cost many a shilling –
From Old Cumnock, where beds are as hard as a plank, sir—
From a chop and green pease, and a chicken in Sanquhar,
This eve, please the Fates, at Drumlanrig we anchor.

W. S.

[Sir Walter's companion on this excursion was Captain, afterwards Sir Adam Ferguson.]

FROM "ROB ROY"

(1)—TO THE MEMORY OF EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE

I. O for the voice of that wild horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
The dying hero's call,
That told imperial Charlemagne,
How Paynim sons of swarthy Spain
Had wrought his champion's fall.

II. Sad over earth and ocean sounding,
And England's distant cliffs astounding,
Such are the notes should say
How Britain's hope, and France's fear,
Victor of Cressy and Poitier,
In Bourdeaux dying lay.

III. "Raise my faint head, my squires," he said,
"And let the casement be display'd,
That I may see once more
The splendour of the setting sun
Gleam on thy mirror'd wave, Garonne,
And Blaye's empurpled shore."

IV. "Like me, he sinks to Glory's sleep,
His fall the dews of evening steep,
As if in sorrow shed.
So soft shall fall the trickling tear,
When England's maids and matrons hear
Of their Black Edward dead.

v. "And though my sun of glory set,
Nor France nor England shall forget
The terror of my name;
And oft shall Britain's heroes rise,
New planets in these southern skies,
Through clouds of blood and flame."

(2)—TRANSLATION FROM ARIOSTO

Ladies, and knights, and arms, and love's fair flame,
Deeds of emprize and courtesy, I sing;
What time the Moors from sultry Africk came,
Led on by Agramant, their youthful king—
He whom revenge and hasty ire did bring
O'er the broad wave, in France to waste and war;
Such ills from old Trojano's death did spring,
Which to avenge he came from realms afar,
And menaced Christian Charles, the Roman Emperor.

Of dauntless Roland, too, my strain shall sound,
In import never known in prose or rhyme,
How He, the chief of judgment deem'd profound,
For luckless love was crazed upon a time—

(3)—FAREWELL

Farewell to the land where the clouds love to rest,
Like the shroud of the dead on the mountain's cold breast;
To the cataract's roar where the eagles reply,
And the lake her lone bosom expands to the sky.

1817.

EPILOGUE TO THE APPEAL [1]

SPOKEN BY MRS. HENRY SIDDONS, FEB. 16, 1818

A cat of yore (or else old Æsop lied)
Was changed into a fair and blooming bride,
But spied a mouse upon her marriage-day,
Forgot her spouse, and seized upon her prey;
Even thus my bridegroom lawyer, as you saw,
Threw off poor me, and pounced upon papa.
His neck from Hymen's mystic knot made loose,
He twisted round my sire's the literal noose.
Such are the fruits of our dramatic labour
Since the New Jail became our next-door neighbour.

[1] "The Appeal," a tragedy, by John Galt, the celebrated author of the *Annals of the Parish*, and other novels, was played for four nights at this time in Edinburgh.

Yes, times *are* changed; for, in your father's age,
The lawyers were the patrons of the stage;
However high advanced by future fate,
There stands the bench (*points to the Pit*) that first received their weight.
The future legal sage, 'twas ours to see,
Doom though unwigg'd, and plead without a fee.

But now, astounding each poor mimic elf,
Instead of lawyers comes the law herself;
Tremendous neighbour, on our right she dwells,
Builds high her towers and excavates her cells;
While on the left she agitates the town,
With the tempestuous question, Up or down?[1]
'Twixt Scylla and Charybdis thus stand we,
Law's final end, and law's uncertainty.
But, soft! who lives at Rome the Pope must flatter,
And jails and lawsuits are no jesting matter.
Then—just farewell! We wait with serious awe
Till your applause or censure gives the law.
Trusting our humble efforts may assure ye,
We hold you Court and Counsel, Judge and Jury.

MACKRIMMON'S LAMENT

AIR—"*Cha till mi tuille*"[2]

Mackrimmon, hereditary piper to the Laird of Macleod, is said to have composed this Lament when the Clan was about to depart upon a distant and dangerous expedition. The Minstrel was impressed with a belief, which the event verified, that he was to be slain in the approaching feud; and hence the Gaelic words, *Cha till mi tuille; ged thillis Macleod, cha till Mackrimmon*, "I shall never return; although Macleod returns, yet Mackrimmon shall never return!" The piece is but too well known, from its being the strain with which the emigrants from the West Highlands and Isles usually take leave of their native shore.

Macleod's wizard flag from the grey castle sallies,
The rowers are seated, unmoor'd are the galleys;
Gleam war-axe and broadsword, clang target and quiver,
As Mackrimmon sings, "Farewell to Dunvegan for ever!
Farewell to each cliff, on which breakers are foaming;
Farewell, each dark glen, in which red-deer are roaming;
Farewell, lonely Skye, to lake, mountain, and river;
Macleod may return, but Mackrimmon shall never!

[1] At this time the public of Edinburgh was much agitated by a law-suit betwixt the magistrates and many of the inhabitants of the city, concerning a range of new buildings on the western side of the North Bridge; which the latter insisted should be removed as a deformity.

[2] "We return no more."

" Farewell the bright clouds that on Quillan are sleeping;
Farewell the bright eyes in the Dun that are weeping;
To each minstrel delusion, farewell!—and for ever—
Mackrimmon departs, to return to you never!
The *Banshee's* wild voice sings the death-dirge before me,
The pall of the dead for a mantle hangs o'er me;
But my heart shall not flag, and my nerves shall not shiver
Though devoted I go—to return again never!

" Too oft shall the notes of Mackrimmon's bewailing
Be heard when the Gael on their exile are sailing;
Dear land! to the shores, whence unwilling we sever,
Return—return—return shall we never!
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille!
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
Gea thillis Macleod, cha till Mackrimmon!"

1818.

DONALD CAIRD'S COME AGAIN

AIR—"*Malcolm Caird's come again*" [1]

CHORUS

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again!

Donald Caird can lilt and sing,
Blithely dance the Hieland fling,
Drink till the gudeman be blind,
Fleech till the gudewife be kind;
Hoop a leglin, clout a pan,
Or crack a pow wi' ony man;
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird can wire a maukin,
Kens the wiles o' dun-deer staukin',
Leisters kipper, makes a shift
To shoot a muir-fowl in the drift;

[1] Caird signifies tinker.

Water-bailiffs, rangers, keepers,
He can wauk when they are sleepers;
Not for bountith or reward
Dare ye mell wi' Donald Caird.

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Gar the bagpipes hum amain,
Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird can drink a gill
Fast as hostler-wife can fill;
Ilka ane that sells gude liquor
Kens how Donald bends a bicker;
When he's fou he's stout and saucy,
Keeps the cantle o' the cawsey;
Hieland chief and Lawland laird
Maun gie room to Donald Caird!

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.

Steek the amrie, lock the kist,
Else some gear may weel be mis't;
Donald Caird finds orra things
Where Allan Gregor fand the tings;
Dunts of kebbuck, taits o' woo,
Whiles a hen and whiles a sow,
Webs or duds frae hedge or yard—
'Ware the wuddie, Donald Caird!

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Dinna let the Shirra ken
Donald Caird's come again.

On Donald Caird the doom was stern,
Craig to tether, legs to airn;
But Donald Caird, wi' mickle study,
Caught the gift to cheat the wuddie;
Rings of airn, and bolts of steel,
Fell like ice frae hand and heel!
Watch the sheep in fauld and glen,
Donald Caird's come again!

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Dinna let the Justice ken,
Donald Caird's come again.

1818.

FROM "THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN"

MADGE WILDFIRE'S SONGS

When the gledd's in the blue cloud,
The lavrock lies still;
When the hound's in the green-wood,
The hind keeps the hill.

O sleep ye sound, Sir James, she said,
When ye suld rise and ride?
There's twenty men, wi' bow and blade,
Are seeking where ye hide.

Hey for cavaliers, ho for cavaliers,
Dub a dub, dub a dub;
Have at old Beelzebub,—
Oliver's running for fear.—

I glance like the wildfire through country and town;
I'm seen on the causeway—I'm seen on the down;
The lightning that flashes so bright and so free,
Is scarcely so blithe or so bonny as me.

What did ye wi' the bridal ring—bridal ring—bridal ring?
What did ye wi' your wedding ring, ye little cutty quean, O?
I gied it till a sodger, a sodger, a sodger,
I gied it till a sodger, an auld true love o' mine, O.

Good even, good fair moon, good even to thee;
I prithee, dear moon, now show to me
The form and the features, the speech and degree,
Of the man that true lover of mine shall be.

It is the bonny butcher lad,
That wears the sleeves of blue,
He sells the flesh on Saturday,
On Friday that he slew.

There's a bloodhound ranging Tinwald Wood,
There's harness glancing sheen;
There's a maiden sits on Tinwald brae,
And she sings loud between.

Up in the air,
On my bonnie grey mare,
And I see, and I see, and I see her yet.

In the bonnie cells of Bedlam,
Ere I was ane and twenty,
I had hempen bracelets strong,
And merry whips, ding-dong,
And prayer and fasting plenty.

My banes are buried in yon kirk-yard
Sae far ayont the sea,
And it is but my blithsome ghaist
That's speaking now to thee.

I'm Madge of the country, I'm Madge of the town,
And I'm Madge of the lad I am blithest to own—
The Lady of Beever in diamonds may shine,
But has not a heart half so lightsome as mine.

I am Queen of the Wake, and I'm Lady of May,
And I lead the blithe ring round the May-pole to-day;
The wild-fire that flashes so fair and so free
Was never so bright, or so bonnie as me.

Our work is over—over now,
The goodman wipes his weary brow,
The last long wain wends slow away,
And we are free to sport and play.

The night comes on when sets the sun,
And labour ends when day is done.
When Autumn's gone, and Winter's come,
We hold our jovial harvest-home.

When the fight of grace is fought,—
When the marriage vest is wrought,—
When Faith has chased cold Doubt away,—
And Hope but sickens at delay,—
When Charity, imprisoned here,
Longs for a more expanded sphere;
Doff thy robes of sin and clay;
Christian, rise, and come away.

Cauld is my bed, Lord Archibald,
And sad my sleep of sorrow:
But thine sall be as sad and cauld,
My fause true-love! to-morrow.

And weep ye not, my maidens free,
Though death your mistress borrow;
For he for whom I die to-day,
Shall die for me to-morrow.

PROUD MAISIE

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?"—
"When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?"—
"The grey-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.
The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'"

1818.

FROM "THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR"

(1)—LUCY ASHTON'S SONG

Look not thou on beauty's charming,—
Sit thou still when kings are arming,—
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,—
Speak not when the people listens,—
Stop thine ear against the singer,—
From the red gold keep thy finger,—
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,
Easy live and quiet die.

(2)—NORMAN THE FORESTER'S SONG

The monk must arise when the matins ring,
The abbot may sleep to their chime;
But the yeoman must start when the bugles sing,
'Tis time, my hearts, 'tis time.

There's bucks and raes on Billhope braes,
There's a herd on Shortwood Shaw;
But a lily white doe in the garden goes,
She's fairly worth them a'.

(3)—THE PROPHECY

When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,
And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!

1819.

FROM "THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE"

(1)—ANCIENT GAELIC MELODY

I. Birds of omen dark and foul,
Night-crow, raven, bat, and owl,
Leave the sick man to his dream—
All night long he heard you scream.
Haste to cave and ruin'd tower,
Ivy tod, or dingled-bower,
There to wink and mop, for, hark!
In the mid air sings the lark.

II. Hie to moorish gills and rocks,
Prowling wolf and wily fox,—
Hie ye fast, nor turn your view,
Though the lamb bleats to the ewe.
Couch your trains, and speed your flight,
Safety parts with parting night;
And on distant echo borne,
Comes the hunter's early horn.

III. The moon's wan crescent scarcely gleams,
Ghost-like she fades in morning beams;
Hie hence, each peevish imp and fay
That scare the pilgrim on his way.—
Quench, kelpy! quench, in bog and fen,
Thy torch, that cheats benighted men;
Thy dance is o'er, thy reign is done,
For Benyieglo hath seen the sun.

IV. Wild thoughts, that, sinful, dark, and deep,
O'erpower the passive mind in sleep,
Pass from the slumberer's soul away,
Like night-mists from the brow of day:
Foul hag, whose blasted visage grim
Smothers the pulse, unnerves the limb,
Spur thy dark palfrey, and begone!
Thou darest not face the godlike sun.

(2)—THE ORPHAN MAID

November's hail-cloud drifts away,
  November's sun-beam wan
Looks coldly on the castle grey,
  When forth comes Lady Anne.

The orphan by the oak was set,
  Her arms, her feet, were bare;
The hail-drops had not melted yet,
  Amid her raven hair.

"And, dame," she said, "by all the ties
  That child and mother know,
Aid one who never knew these joys,—
  Relieve an orphan's woe."

The lady said, "An orphan's state
  Is hard and sad to bear;
Yet worse the widow'd mother's fate,
  Who mourns both lord and heir.

"Twelve times the rolling year has sped,
  Since, while from vengeance wild
Of fierce Strathallan's chief I fled,
  Forth's eddies whelm'd my child."—

"Twelve times the year its course has borne,"
  The wandering maid replied;
"Since fishers on St. Bridget's morn
  Drew nets on Campsie side.

"St. Bridget sent no scaly spoil;
  An infant, well-nigh dead,
They saved, and rear'd in want and toil,
  To beg from you her bread."

That orphan maid the lady kiss'd,—
  "My husband's looks you bear;
Saint Bridget and her morn be bless'd!
  You are his widow's heir."

They've robed that maid, so poor and pale,
  In silk and sandals rare;
And pearls, for drops of frozen hail,
  Are glistening in her hair.

FROM "IVANHOE"

(1)—THE CRUSADER'S RETURN

I. High deeds achieved of knightly fame,
From Palestine the champion came;
The cross upon his shoulders borne,
Battle and blast had dimm'd and torn.
Each dint upon his batter'd shield
Was token of a foughten field;
And thus, beneath his lady's bower,
He sung, as fell the twilight hour:

II. "Joy to the fair!—thy knight behold,
Return'd from yonder land of gold;
No wealth he brings, nor wealth can need,
Save his good arms and battle-steed;
His spurs to dash against a foe,
His lance and sword to lay him low;
Such all the trophies of his toil,
Such—and the hope of Tekla's smile!

III. "Joy to the fair! whose constant knight
Her favour fired to feats of might!
Unnoted shall she not remain
Where meet the bright and noble train;
Minstrel shall sing, and herald tell—
'Mark yonder maid of beauty well,
'Tis she for whose bright eyes was won
The listed field of Ascalon!

IV. "'Note well her smile!—it edged the blade
Which fifty wives to widows made,
When, vain his strength and Mahound's spell,
Iconium's turban'd Soldan fell.
See'st thou her locks, whose sunny glow
Half shows, half shades, her neck of snow?
Twines not of them one golden thread,
But for its sake a Paynim bled.'

V. "Joy to the fair!—my name unknown,
Each deed, and all its praise, thine own;
Then, oh! unbar this churlish gate,
The night-dew falls, the hour is late.
Inured to Syria's glowing breath,
I feel the north breeze chill as death;
Let grateful love quell maiden shame,
And grant him bliss who brings thee fame."

(2)—THE BAREFOOTED FRIAR

I. I'll give thee, good fellow, a twelvemonth or twain,
To search Europe through from Byzantium to Spain;
But ne'er shall you find, should you search till you tire,
So happy a man as the Barefooted Friar.

II. Your knight for his lady pricks forth in career,
And is brought home at even-song prick'd through with a spear;
I confess him in haste—for his lady desires
No comfort on earth save the Barefooted Friar's.

III. Your monarch!—Pshaw! many a prince has been known
To barter his robes for our cowl and our gown;
But which of us ne'er felt the idle desire
To exchange for a crown the grey hood of a Friar?

IV. The Friar has walk'd out, and where'er he has gone,
The land and its fatness is mark'd for his own;
He can roam where he lists, he can stop where he tires,
For every man's house is the Barefooted Friar's.

V. He's expected at noon, and no wight, till he comes,
May profane the great chair, or the porridge of plums;
For the best of the cheer, and the seat by the fire,
Is the undenied right of the Barefooted Friar.

VI. He's expected at night, and the pasty's made hot,
They broach the brown ale, and they fill the black pot;
And the good-wife would wish the good-man in the mire,
Ere he lack'd a soft pillow, the Barefooted Friar.

VII. Long flourish the sandal, the cord, and the cope,
The dread of the devil and trust of the Pope!
For to gather life's roses, unscathed by the briar,
Is granted alone to the Barefooted Friar.

(3)—SAXON WAR-SONG

I. Whet the bright steel,
Sons of the White Dragon!
Kindle the torch,
Daughter of Hengist!
The steel glimmers not for the carving of the banquet,
It is hard, broad, and sharply pointed;

The torch goeth not to the bridal chamber,
It steams and glitters blue with sulphur.
Whet the steel, the raven croaks!
Light the torch, Zernebock is yelling!
Whet the steel, sons of the Dragon!
Kindle the torch, daughter of Hengist!

II. The black clouds are low over the thane's castle:
The eagle screams—he rides on their bosom.
Scream not, grey rider of the sable cloud,
Thy banquet is prepared!
The maidens of Valhalla look forth,
The race of Hengist will send them guests.
Shake your black tresses, maidens of Valhalla!
And strike your loud timbrels for joy!
Many a haughty step bends to your halls,
Many a helmed head.

III. Dark sits the evening upon the thane's castle,
The black clouds gather round;
Soon shall they be red as the blood of the valiant!
The destroyer of forests shall shake his red crest against them;
He, the bright consumer of palaces,
Broad waves he his blazing banner,
Red, wide, and dusky,
Over the strife of the valiant;
His joy is in the clashing swords and broken bucklers;
He loves to lick the hissing blood as it burst warm from the wound!

IV. All must perish!
The sword cleaveth the helmet;
The strong armour is pierced by the lance:
Fire devoureth the dwelling of princes,
Engines break down the fences of the battle.
All must perish!
The race of Hengist is gone—
The name of Horsa is no more!
Shrink not then from your doom, sons of the sword!
Let your blades drink blood like wine;
Feast ye in the banquet of slaughter,
By the light of the blazing halls!
Strong be your swords while your blood is warm.
And spare neither for pity nor fear,
For vengeance hath but an hour;
Strong hate itself shall expire!
I also must perish.

(4)—REBECCA'S HYMN

When Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her fathers' God before her moved,
An awful guide in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonish'd lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimson'd sands
Return'd the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answer'd keen,
And Zion's daughters pour'd their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze,
Forsaken Israel wanders lone:
Our fathers would not know THY ways,
And THOU hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen!
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of THEE a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray.
And oh, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be THOU, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censer round our altar beams,
And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn.
But THOU hast said, The blood of goat,
The flesh of rams I will not prize;
A contrite heart, a humble thought,
Are mine accepted sacrifice.

(5)—THE BLACK KNIGHT'S SONG

Anna-Marie, love, up is the sun,
Anna-Marie, love, morn is begun,
Mists are dispersing, love, birds singing free,
Up in the morning, love, Anna-Marie.
Anna-Marie, love, up in the morn,
The hunter is winding blithe sounds on his horn,
The echo rings merry from rock and from tree,
'Tis time to arouse thee, love, Anna-Marie.

WAMBA

O Tybalt, love, Tybalt, awake me not yet,
Around my soft pillow while softer dreams flit;
For what are the joys that in waking we prove,
Compared with these visions, O Tybalt! my love?
Let the birds to the rise of the mist carol shrill,
Let the hunter blow out his loud horn on the hill,
Softer sounds, softer pleasures, in slumber I prove,
But think not I dream'd of thee, Tybalt, my love.

(6)—SONG

KNIGHT AND WAMBA

There came three merry men from south, west, and north,
Ever more sing the roundelay;
To win the Widow of Wycombe forth,
And where was the widow might say them nay?

The first was a knight, and from Tynedale he came,
Ever more sing the roundelay;
And his fathers, God save us, were men of great fame,
And where was the widow might say him nay?

Of his father the laird, of his uncle the squire,
He boasted in rhyme and in roundelay;
She bade him go bask by his sea-coal fire,
For she was the widow would say him nay.

WAMBA

The next that came forth, swore by blood and by nails,
Merrily sing the roundelay;
Hur's a gentleman, God wot, and hur's lineage was of Wales,
And where was the widow might say him nay?

Sir David ap Morgan ap Griffith ap Hugh
Ap Tudor ap Rhice, quoth his roundelay;
She said that one widow for so many was too few,
And she bade the Welshman wend his way.

But then next came a yeoman, a yeoman of Kent,
Jollily singing his roundelay;
He spoke to the widow of living and tent,
And where was the widow could say him nay?

BOTH

So the knight and the squire were both left in the mire,
There for to sing their roundelay;
For a yeoman of Kent, with his yearly rent,
There ne'er was a widow could say him nay.

(7)—FUNERAL HYMN

Dust unto dust,
To this all must;
  The tenant hath resign'd
The faded form
To waste and worm—
  Corruption claims her kind.

Through paths unknown
Thy soul hath flown,
  To seek the realms of woe,
Where fiery pain
Shall purge the stain
  Of actions done below.

In that sad place,
By Mary's grace,
  Brief may thy dwelling be!
Till prayers and alms,
And holy psalms,
  Shall set the captive free.

EPITAPH ON MRS. ERSKINE [1]

Plain, as her native dignity of mind,
Arise the tomb of her we have resign'd;
Unflaw'd and stainless be the marble scroll,
Emblem of lovely form and candid soul.—
But, oh! what symbol may avail, to tell
The kindness, wit, and sense, we loved so well?
What sculpture show the broken ties of life,
Here buried with the parent, friend, and wife!
Or on the tablet stamp each title dear,
By which thine urn, EUPHEMIA, claims the tear!
Yet taught, by thy meek sufferance, to assume
Patience in anguish, hope beyond the tomb,
Resign'd, though sad, this votive verse shall flow,
And brief, alas! as thy brief span below.

1819.

[1] Mrs. Euphemia Robison, wife of William Erskine, Esq. (afterwards Lord Kinedder), died September, 1819, and was buried at Saline, in the county of Fife, where these lines are inscribed on the tombstone.

FROM "THE MONASTERY"

(1)—SONGS OF THE WHITE LADY OF AVENEL

ON TWEED RIVER

I. Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
Both current and ripple are dancing in light.
We have roused the night raven, I heard him croak,
As we plashed along beneath the oak
That flings its broad branches so far and so wide,
Their shadows are dancing in midst of the tide.
"Who wakens my nestlings!" the raven he said,
"My beak shall ere morn in his blood be red!
For a blue swollen corpse is a dainty meal,
And I'll have my share with the pike and the eel."

II. Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
There's a golden gleam on the distant height:
There's a silver shower on the alders dank,
And the drooping willows that wave on the bank.
I see the Abbey, both turret and tower,
It is all astir for the vesper hour;
The Monks for the chapel are leaving each cell,
But where's Father Philip should toll the bell?

III. Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
Downward we drift through shadow and light;
Under yon rock the eddies sleep,
Calm and silent, dark and deep.
The Kelpy has risen from the fathomless pool,
He has lighted his candle of death and of dool:
Look, Father, look, and you'll laugh to see
How he gapes and glares with his eyes on thee!

IV. Good luck to your fishing, whom watch ye to-night?
A man of mean or a man of might?
Is it layman or priest that must float in your cove,
Or lover who crosses to visit his love?
Hark! heard ye the Kelpy reply as we pass'd,—
"God's blessing on the warder, he lock'd the bridge fast!
All that come to my cove are sunk,
Priest or layman, lover or monk."

Landed landed! the black book hath won,
Else had you seen Berwick with morning sun!
Sain ye, and save ye, and blithe mot ye be,
For seldom they land that go swimming with me.

TO THE SUB-PRIOR

Good evening, Sir Priest, and so late as you ride,
With your mule so fair, and your mantle so wide;
But ride you through valley, or ride you o'er hill.
There is one that has warrant to wait on you still.
Back, back,
The volume black!
I have a warrant to carry it back.

What, ho! Sub-Prior, and came you but here
To conjure a book from a dead woman's bier?
Sain you, and save you, be wary and wise,
Ride back with the book, or you'll pay for your prize.
Back, back,
There's death in the track!
In the name of my master, I bid thee bear back.

"In the name of MY Master," said the astonished monk, "that name before which all things created tremble, I conjure thee to say what thou art that hauntest me thus?"
The same voice replied—

That which is neither ill nor well,
That which belongs not to heaven nor to hell,
A wreath of the mist, a bubble of the stream,
'Twixt a waking thought and a sleeping dream;
A form that men spy
With the half-shut eye
In the beams of the setting sun, am I.

Vainly, Sir Prior, wouldst thou bar me my right!
Like the star when it shoots, I can dart through the night;
I can dance on the torrent, and ride on the air,
And travel the world with the bonny night-mare.
Again, again,
At the crook of the glen,
Where bickers the burnie, I'll meet thee again.

Men of good are bold as sackless,
Men of rude are wild and reckless.
Lie thou still
In the nook of the hill,
For those be before thee that wish thee ill.

HALBERT'S INCANTATION

Thrice to the holly brake—
Thrice to the well:—
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel!

Noon gleams on the Lake—
Noon glows on the Fell—
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel.

TO HALBERT

Youth of the dark eye, wherefore didst thou call me?
Wherefore art thou here, if terrors can appal thee?
He that seeks to deal with us must know nor fear, nor failing;
To coward and churl our speech is dark, our gifts are unavailing.
The breeze that brought me hither now must sweep Egyptian ground,
The fleecy cloud on which I ride for Araby is bound;
The fleecy cloud is drifting by, the breeze sighs for my stay,
For I must sail a thousand miles before the close of day.

What I am I must not show—
What I am thou couldst not know—
Something betwixt heaven and hell—
Something that neither stood nor fell—
Something that through thy wit or will
May work thee good—may work thee ill.
Neither substance quite, nor shadow,
Haunting lonely moor and meadow,
Dancing by the haunted spring,
Riding on the whirlwind's wing;
Aping in fantastic fashion
Every change of human passion,
While o'er our frozen minds they pass,
Like shadows from the mirror'd glass.
Wayward, fickle, is our mood,
Hovering betwixt bad and good,
Happier than brief-dated man,
Living ten times o'er his span;
Far less happy, for we have
Help nor hope beyond the grave!

Man awakes to joy or sorrow;
Ours the sleep that knows no morrow.
This is all that I can show—
This is all that thou may'st know.

Ay! and I taught thee the word and the spell,
To waken me here by the Fairies' Well.
But thou hast loved the heron and hawk,
More than to seek my haunted walk;
And thou hast loved the lance and the sword,

More than good text and holy word;
And thou hast loved the deer to track,
More than the lines and the letters black;
And thou art a ranger of moss and wood,
And scornest the nurture of gentle blood.

——

Thy craven fear my truth accused,
Thine idlehood my trust abused;
He that draws to harbour late,
Must sleep without, or burst the gate.
There is a star for thee which burn'd,
Its influence wanes, its course is turn'd;
Valour and constancy alone
Can bring thee back the chance that's flown.

——

Within that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race,
To whom God has granted grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

——

Many a fathom dark and deep
I have laid the book to sleep;
Ethereal fires around it glowing—
Ethereal music ever flowing—
The sacred pledge of Heav'n
All things revere,
Each in his sphere,
Save man for whom 'twas giv'n:
Lend thy hand, and thou shalt spy
Things ne'er seen by mortal eye.

——

Fearest thou to go with me?
Still it is free to thee
A peasant to dwell;
Thou may'st drive the dull steer,
And chase the king's deer,
But never more come near
This haunted well.

——

Here lies the volume thou boldly hast sought;
Touch it, and take it, 'will dearly be bought.

Rash thy deed,
Mortal weed
To immortal flames applying;
Rasher trust
Has thing of dust,
On his own weak worth relying:
Strip thee of such fences vain,
Strip, and prove thy luck again.

— —

Mortal warp and mortal woof
Cannot brook this charmed roof;
All that mortal art hath wrought
In our cell returns to nought.
The molten gold returns to clay,
The polish'd diamond melts away;
All is altered, all is flown,
Nought stands fast but truth alone.
Not for that thy quest give o'er:
Courage! prove thy chance once more.

— — —

Alas! alas!
Not ours the grace
These holy characters to trace:
Idle forms of painted air,
Not to us is given to share
The boon bestow'd on Adam's race.
With patience bide,
Heaven will provide
The fitting time, the fitting guide.

HALBERT'S SECOND INTERVIEW WITH THE WHITE LADY OF AVENEL

This is the day when the fairy kind
Sit weeping alone for their hopeless lot,
And the wood-maiden sighs to the sighing wind,
And the mermaiden weeps in her crystal grot;
For this is a day that the deed was wrought,
In which we have neither part nor share,
For the children of clay was salvation bought,
But not for the forms of sea or air!
And ever the mortal is most forlorn,
Who meeteth our race on the Friday morn.

— —

Daring youth! for thee it is well,
Here calling me in haunted dell,
That thy heart has not quail'd,
Nor thy courage fail'd,
And that thou couldst brook

The angry look
Of Her of Avenel.
Did one limb shiver,
Or an eyelid quiver,
Thou wert lost for ever.

———

Though I am form'd from the ether blue,
And my blood is of the unfallen dew,
And thou art framed of mud and dust,
'Tis thine to speak, reply I must.

———

A mightier wizard far than I
Wields o'er the universe his power;
Him owns the eagle in the sky,
The turtle in the bower.
Changeful in shape, yet mightiest still,
He wields the heart of man at will,
From ill to good, from good to ill,
In cot and castle-tower.

———

Ask thy heart, whose secret cell
Is fill'd with Mary Avenel!
Ask thy pride, why scornful look
In Mary's view it will not brook?
Ask it, why thou seek'st to rise
Among the mighty and the wise,—
Why thou spurn'st thy lowly lot,—
Why thy pastimes are forgot,—
Why thou wouldst in bloody strife
Mend thy luck or lose thy life?
Ask thy heart, and it shall tell,
Sighing from its secret cell,
'Tis for Mary Avenel.

———

Do not ask me;
On doubts like these thou canst not task me.
We only see the passing show
Of human passions' ebb and flow;
And view the pageant's idle glance
As mortals eye the northern dance,
When thousand streamers, flashing bright,
Career it o'er the brow of night,
And gazers mark their changeful gleams,
But feel no influence from their beams.

———

By ties mysterious link'd, our fated race
Holds strange connection with the sons of men.
The star that rose upon the House of Avenel,
When Norman Ulric first assumed the name,

That star, when culminating in its orbit,
Shot from its sphere a drop of diamond dew,
And this bright font received it—and a Spirit
Rose from the fountain, and her date of life
Hath co-existence with the House of Avenel
And with the star that rules it.

Look on my girdle—on this thread of gold—
'Tis fine as web of lightest gossamer,
And, but there is a spell on 't, would not bind,
Light as they are, the folds of my thin robe.
But when 'twas donn'd, it was a massive chain,
Such as might bind the champion of the Jews,
Even when his locks were longest—it hath dwindled,
Hath 'minish'd in its substance and its strength,
As sunk the greatness of the House of Avenel.
When this frail thread gives way, I to the elements
Resign the principles of life they lent me.
Ask me no more of this!—the stars forbid it.

Dim burns the once bright star of Avenel,
Dim as the beacon when the morn is nigh,
And the o'er-wearied warder leaves the light-house;
There is an influence sorrowful and fearful,
That dogs its downward course. Disastrous passion,
Fierce hate and rivalry, are in the aspect
That lowers upon its fortunes.

Complain not on me, child of clay,
If to thy harm I yield the way.
We, who soar thy sphere above,
Know not aught of hate or love;
As will or wisdom rules thy mood,
My gifts to evil turn or good.

When Piercie Shafton boasteth high,
Let this token meet his eye,
The sun is westering from the dell,
Thy wish is granted—fare thee well!

THE WHITE LADY TO MARY AVENEL

Maiden, whose sorrows wail the Living Dead,
Whose eyes shall commune with the Dead Alive,
Maiden, attend! Beneath my foot lies hid
The Word, the Law, the Path which thou dost strive
To find, and canst not find.—Could Spirits shed
Tears for their lot, it were my lot to weep,
Showing the road which I shall never tread,

Though my foot points it.—Sleep, eternal sleep,
Dark, long, and cold forgetfulness my lot!—
But do not thou at human ills repine;
Secure there lies full guerdon in this spot
For all the woes that wait frail Adam's line—
Stoop then and make it your's,—I may not make it mine!

THE WHITE LADY TO EDWARD GLENDINNING

Thou who seek'st my fountain lone,
With thoughts and hopes thou dar'st not own;
Whose heart within leap'd wildly glad,
When most his brow seem'd dark and sad;
Hie thee back, thou find'st not here
Corpse or coffin, grave or bier;
The Dead Alive is gone and fled—
Go thou, and join the Living Dead!

The Living Dead, whose sober brow
Oft shrouds such thoughts as thou hast now,
Whose hearts within are seldom cured
Of passions by their vows abjured;
Where, under sad and solemn show,
Vain hopes are nursed, wild wishes glow.
Seek the convent's vaulted room,
Prayer and vigil be thy doom;
Doff the green, and don the grey,
To the cloister hence away!

THE WHITE LADY'S FAREWELL

Fare thee well, thou Holly green!
Thou shalt seldom now be seen,
With all thy glittering garlands bending,
As to greet my slow descending,
Startling the bewilder'd hind,
Who sees thee wave without a wind.

Farewell, Fountain! now not long
Shalt thou murmur to my song,
While thy crystal bubbles glancing,
Keep the time in mystic dancing,
Rise and swell, are burst and lost,
Like mortal schemes by fortune cross'd.

The knot of fate at length is tied,
The Churl is Lord, the Maid is Bride!
Vainly did my magic sleight
Send the lover from her sight;
Wither bush, and perish well,
Fall'n is lofty Avenel!

(2)—BORDER BALLAD

I. March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
Many a banner spread,
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story.
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and our old Scottish glory.

II. Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding,
Stand to your arms, and march in good order,
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray,
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.

1820.

FROM "THE ABBOT"

(1)—THE PARDONER'S ADVERTISEMENT

Listneth, gode people, everiche one,
For in the londe of Babylone,
Far eastward I wot it lyeth,
And is the first londe the sonne espieth,
Ther, as he cometh fro out the sé;
In this ilk londe, as thinketh me,
Right as holie legendes tell,
Snottreth from a roke a well,
And falleth into ane bath of ston,
Wher chast Susanne in times long gon,
Was wont to wash her bodie and lim—
Mickle vertue hath that streme,
As ye shall se er that ye pas,
Ensample by this little glas—
Through nightés cold and dayés hote,
Hiderward I have it brought;
Hath a wife made slip or slide,
Or a maiden stepp'd aside;
Putteth this water under her nese,
Wold she nold she, she shall snese.

(2)—YOUTH AND MAN

Youth! thou wear'st to manhood now,
Darker lip and darker brow,
Statelier step, more pensive mien,
In thy face and gait are seen:
Thou must not brook midnight watches,
Take thy food and sport by snatches!
For the gambol and the jest,
Thou wert wont to love the best,
Graver follies must thou follow,
But as senseless, false, and hollow.

1820.

FROM "KENILWORTH"

(1)—GOLDTHRED'S SONG

Of all the birds on bush or tree,
Commend me to the owl,
Since he may best ensample be
To those the cup that trowl.
For when the sun hath left the west,
He chooses the tree that he loves the best,
And he whoops out his song, and he laughs at his jest,
Then, though hours be late, and weather foul,
We'll drink to the health of the bonny, bonny owl.

The lark is but a bumpkin fowl,
He sleeps in his nest till morn;
But my blessing upon the jolly owl,
That all night blows his horn.
Then up with your cup till you stagger in speech,
And match me this catch, till you swagger and screech,
And drink till you wink, my merry men each;
For, though hours be late, and weather be foul,
We'll drink to the health of the bonny, bonny owl.

(2)—SPEECH OF THE PORTER AT KENILWORTH

What stir, what turmoil, have we for the nones?
Stand back, my masters, or beware your bones!
Sirs, I'm a warder, and no man of straw;
My voice keeps order, and my club gives law.

Yet soft—nay stay—what vision have we here?
What dainty darling's this—what peerless peer?
What loveliest face, that loving ranks enfold,

Like brightest diamond chased in purest gold?
Dazzled and blind, mine office I forsake,
My club, my key, my knee, my homage take.
Bright paragon, pass on in joy and bliss;—
Beshrew the gate that opes not wide at such a sight as this!

1821.

FROM "THE PIRATE"

(1)—THE SONG OF THE TEMPEST

I. Stern eagle of the far north-west,
Thou that bearest in thy grasp the thunderbolt,
Thou whose rushing pinions stir ocean to madness,
Thou the destroyer of herds, thou the scatterer of navies,
Amidst the scream of thy rage,
Amidst the rushing of thy onward wings,
Though thy scream be loud as the cry of a perishing nation,
Though the rushing of thy wings be like the roar of ten thousand waves,
Yet hear, in thine ire and thy haste,
Hear thou the voice of the Reim-kennar.

II. Thou hast met the pine-trees of Drontheim,
Their dark-green heads lie prostrate beside their uprooted stems;
Thou hast met the rider of the ocean,
The tall, the strong bark of the fearless rover,
And she has struck to thee the topsail
That she had not veil'd to a royal armada.
Thou hast met the tower that bears its crest among the clouds,
The battled massive tower of the Jarl of former days,
And the cope-stone of the turret
Is lying upon its hospitable hearth;
But thou too shalt stoop, proud compeller of clouds,
When thou hearest the voice of the Reim-kennar.

III. There are verses that can stop the stag in the forest,
Ay, and when the dark-colour'd dog is opening on his track;
There are verses can make the wild hawk pause on the wing,
Like the falcon that wears the hood and the jesses,
And who knows the shrill whistle of the fowler.

Thou who canst mock at the scream of the drowning mariner,
And the crash of the ravaged forest,
And the groan of the overwhelmed crowds,
When the church hath fallen in the moment of prayer;
There are sounds which thou also must list,
When they are chanted by the voice of the Reim-kennar.

IV. Enough of woe hast thou wrought on the ocean,
The widows wring their hands on the beach;
Enough of woe hast thou wrought on the land,
The husbandman folds his arms in despair;
Cease thou the waving of thy pinions,
Let the ocean repose in her dark strength;
Cease thou the flashing of thine eye,
Let the thunderbolt sleep in the armoury of Odin;
Be thou still at my bidding, viewless racer of the north-western heaven,—
Sleep thou at the voice of Norna the Reim-kennar.

V. Eagle of the far north-western waters,
Thou hast heard the voice of the Reim-kennar,
Thou hast closed thy wide sails at her bidding,
And folded them in peace by thy side.
My blessing be on thy retiring path;
When thou stoopest from thy place on high,
Soft be thy slumbers in the caverns of the unknown ocean,
Rest till destiny shall again awaken thee;
Eagle of the north-west, thou hast heard the voice of the Reim-kennar.

(2)—CLAUD HALCRO'S SONG

MARY

Farewell to Northmaven,
Grey Hillswicke, farewell!
To the calms of thy haven,
The storms on thy fell—
To each breeze that can vary
The mood of thy main,
And to thee, bonny Mary!
We meet not again!

Farewell the wild ferry,
Which Hacon could brave,
When the peaks of the Skerry
Were white in the wave.

There's a maid may look over
These wild waves in vain,—
For the skiff of her lover—
He comes not again!

The vows thou hast broke,
On the wild currents fling them;
On the quicksand and rock
Let the mermaidens sing them.
New sweetness they'll give her
Bewildering strain;
But there's one who will never
Believe them again.

O were there an island,
Though ever so wild,
Where woman could smile, and
No man be beguiled—
Too tempting a snare
To poor mortals were given;
And the hope would fix there,
That should anchor in heaven.

(3)—THE SONG OF HAROLD HARFAGER

The sun is rising dimly red,
The wind is wailing low and dread;
From his cliff the eagle sallies,
Leaves the wolf his darksome valleys;
In the mist the ravens hover,
Peep the wild dogs from the cover,
Screaming, croaking, baying, yelling,
Each in his wild accents telling,
"Soon we feast on dead and dying,
Fair-hair'd Harold's flag is flying."

Many a crest on air is streaming,
Many a helmet darkly gleaming,
Many an arm the axe uprears,
Doom'd to hew the wood of spears.
All along the crowded ranks
Horses neigh and armour clanks;
Chiefs are shouting, clarions ringing,
Louder still the bard is singing,
"Gather footmen, gather horsemen,
To the field, ye valiant Norsemen!

"Halt ye not for food or slumber,
View not vantage, count not number:
Jolly reapers, forward still,
Grow the crop on vale or hill,
Thick or scatter'd, stiff or lithe,
It shall down before the scythe.
Forward with your sickles bright.
Reap the harvest of the fight.—
Onward footmen, onward horsemen,
To the charge, ye gallant Norsemen!

"Fatal Choosers of the Slaughter,
O'er you hovers Odin's daughter;
Hear the choice she spreads before ye,—
Victory, and wealth, and glory;
Or old Valhalla's roaring hail,
Her ever-circling mead and ale,
Where for eternity unite
The joys of wassail and of fight.
Headlong forward, foot and horsemen,
Charge and fight, and die like Norsemen!"

(4)—SONG OF THE MERMAIDS AND MERMEN

MERMAID

Fathoms deep beneath the wave,
  Stringing beads of glistering pearl,
Singing the achievements brave
  Of many an old Norwegian earl;
Dwelling where the tempest's raving,
  Falls as light upon our ear,
As the sigh of lover, craving
  Pity from his lady dear,
Children of wild Thule, we,
From the deep caves of the sea,
As the lark springs from the lea,
Hither come, to share your glee.

MERMAN

From reining of the water-horse,
  That bounded till the waves were foaming,
Watching the infant tempest's course,
  Chasing the sea-snake in his roaming;
From winding charge-notes on the shell,
  When the huge whale and sword-fish duel,
Or tolling shroudless seamen's knell,
  When the winds and waves are cruel;

Children of wild Thule, we
Have plough'd such furrows on the sea,
As the steer draws on the lea,
And hither we come to share your glee.

MERMAIDS AND MERMEN

We heard you in our twilight caves,
A hundred fathom deep below,
For notes of joy can pierce the waves,
That drown each sound of war and woe.
Those who dwell beneath the sea
Love the sons of Thule well;
Thus, to aid your mirth, bring we
Dance, and song, and sounding shell.
Children of dark Thule, know,
Those who dwell by haaf and voe,
Where your daring shallops row,
Come to share the festal show.

(5)—NORNA'S SONG

For leagues along the watery way,
Through gulf and stream my course has been;
The billows know my Runic lay,
And smooth their crests to silent green.

The billows know my Runic lay,—
The gulf grows smooth, the stream is still;
But human hearts, more wild than they,
Know but the rule of wayward will.

One hour is mine, in all the year,
To tell my woes,—and one alone;
When gleams this magic lamp, 'tis here,—
When dies the mystic light, 'tis gone.

Daughters of northern Magnus, hail!
The lamp is lit, the flame is clear,—
To you I come to tell my tale,
Awake, arise, my tale to hear!

(6)—CLAUD HALCRO AND NORNA

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother darksome, Mother dread;
Dweller on the Fitful-head,
Thou canst see what deeds are done
Under the never-setting sun.

Look through sleet, and look through frost,
Look to Greenland's caves and coast,—
By the ice-berg is a sail
Chasing of the swarthy whale;
Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Tell us, has the good ship sped?

NORNA

The thought of the aged is ever on gear,—
On his fishing, his furrow, his flock, and his steer;
But thrive may his fishing, flock, furrow, and herd,
While the aged for anguish shall tear his grey beard.
The ship, well-laden as bark need be,
Lies deep in the furrow of the Iceland sea;—
The breeze for Zetland blows fair and soft,
And gaily the garland is fluttering aloft:
Seven good fishes have spouted their last,
And their jaw-bones are hanging to yard and mast;
Two are for Lerwick, and two for Kirkwall,—
Three for Burgh Westra, the choicest of all.

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful-head,
Thou hast conn'd full many a rhyme,
That lives upon the surge of time:
Tell me, shall my lays be sung,
Like Hacon's of the golden tongue,
Long after Halcro's dead and gone?
Or, shall Hialtland's minstrel own
One note to rival glorious John?

NORNA

The infant loves the rattle's noise;
Age, double childhood, hath its toys;
But different far the descant rings,
As strikes a different hand the strings.
The eagle mounts the polar sky—
The Imber-goose, unskill'd to fly,
Must be content to glide along,
Where seal and sea-dog list his song.

CLAUD HALCRO

Be mine the Imber-goose to play,
And haunt lone cave and silent bay;
The archer's aim so shall I shun—
So shall I 'scape the levell'd gun—

Content my verses' tuneless jingle,
With Thule's sounding tides to mingle,
While, to the ear of wondering wight,
Upon the distant headland's height,
Soften'd by murmur of the sea,
The rude sounds seem like harmony!

. . . . .

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful-head,
A gallant bark from far abroad,
Saint Magnus hath her in his road,
With guns and firelocks not a few—
A silken and a scarlet crew,
Deep stored with precious merchandise,
Of gold, and goods of rare device—
What interest hath our comrade bold
In bark and crew, in goods and gold?

NORNA

Gold is ruddy, fair, and free,
Blood is crimson, and dark to see;—
I look'd out on Saint Magnus Bay,
And I saw a falcon that struck her prey,—
A gobbet of flesh in her beak she bore,
And talons and singles are dripping with gore;—
Let he that asks after them look on his hand,
And if there is blood on't, he's one of their band.

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful-head,
Well thou know'st it is thy task
To tell what Beauty will not ask;—
Then steep thy words in wine and milk,
And weave a doom of gold and silk,—
For we would know, shall Brenda prove
In love, and happy in her love?

NORNA

Untouch'd by love, the maiden's breast,
Is like the snow on Rona's crest,
High seated in the middle sky,
In bright and barren purity;
But by the sunbeam gently kiss'd,
Scarce by the gazing eye 'tis miss'd,
Ere, down the lonely valley stealing,

Fresh grass and growth its course revealing,
It cheers the flock, revives the flower,
And decks some happy shepherd's bower.

MAGNUS TROIL

Mother speak, and do not tarry,
Here's a maiden fain would marry.
Shall she marry, ay or not?
If she marry, what's her lot?

NORNA

Untouch'd by love, the maiden's breast
Is like the snow on Rona's crest;
So pure, so free from earthy dye,
It seems, whilst leaning on the sky,
Part of the heaven to which 'tis nigh;
But passion, like the wild March rain,
May soil the wreath with many a stain.
We gaze—the lovely vision's gone—
A torrent fills the bed of stone,
That hurrying to destruction's shock,
Leaps headlong from the lofty rock.

(7)—SONG OF THE ZETLAND FISHERMAN

Farewell, merry maidens, to song, and to laugh,
For the brave lads of Westra are bound to the Haaf;
And we must have labour, and hunger, and pain,
Ere we dance with the maids of Dunrossness again.

For now, in our trim boats of Noroway deal,
We must dance on the waves, with the porpoise and seal;
The breeze it shall pipe, so it pipe not too high,
And the gull be our songstress when'er she flits by.

Sing on, my brave bird, while we follow, like thee,
By bank, shoal, and quicksand, the swarms of the sea;
And when twenty-score fishes are straining our line,
Sing louder, brave bird, for their spoils shall be thine.

We'll sing while we bait, and we'll sing while we haul
For the deeps of the Haaf have enough for us all:
There is torsk for the gentle, and skate for the carle,
And there's wealth for bold Magnus, the son of the earl.

Huzza! my brave comrades, give way for the Haaf,
We shall sooner come back to the dance and the laugh;
For light without mirth is a lamp without oil;
Then, mirth and long life to the bold Magnus Troil!

(8)—CLEVELAND'S SONGS

I.

Love wakes and weeps
While Beauty sleeps!
O for Music's softest numbers,
To prompt a theme,
For Beauty's dream,
Soft as the pillow of her slumbers!

II.

Through groves of palm
Sigh gales of balm,
Fire-flies on the air are wheeling;
While through the gloom
Comes soft perfume,
The distant beds of flowers revealing.

III.

O wake and live!
No dream can give
A shadow'd bliss, the real excelling;
No longer sleep,
From lattice peep,
And list the tale that Love is telling.

Farewell! Farewell! the voice you hear,
Has left its last soft tone with you,—
Its next must join the seaward cheer,
And shout among the shouting crew.

The accents which I scarce could form
Beneath your frown's controlling check,
Must give the word, above the storm,
To cut the mast, and clear the wreck.

The timid eye I dared not raise,—
The hand, that shook when press'd to thine,
Must point the guns upon the chase—
Must bid the deadly cutlass shine.

To all I love, or hope, or fear,—
Honour, or own, a long adieu!
To all that life has soft and dear,
Farewell! save memory of you!

(9)—CLAUD HALCRO'S VERSES

And you shall deal the funeral dole;
Ay, deal it, mother mine,
To weary body, and to heavy soul,
The white bread and the wine.

And you shall deal my horses of pride;
Ay, deal them, mother mine!
And you shall deal my lands so wide,
And deal my castles nine.

But deal not vengeance for the deed,
And deal not for the crime;
The body to its place, and the soul to Heaven's grace,
And the rest in God's own time.

——

Saint Magnus control thee, that martyr of treason;
Saint Ronan rebuke thee, with rhyme and with reason;
By the mass of Saint Martin, the might of Saint Mary,
Be thou gone, or thy weird shall be worse if thou tarry!
If of good, go hence and hallow thee;—
If of ill, let the earth swallow thee;—
If thou'rt of air, let the grey mist fold thee;—
If of earth, let the swart mine hold thee;—
If a Pixie, seek thy ring;—
If a Nixie, seek thy spring;—
If on middle earth thou'st been
Slave of sorrow, shame, and sin,
Hast eat the bread of toil and strife,
And dree'd the lot which men call life;
Begone to thy stone! for thy coffin is scant of thee,
The worm, thy play-fellow, wails for the want of thee:
Hence, houseless ghost! let the earth hide thee,
Till Michael shall blow the blast, see that there thou bide thee!—
Phantom, fly hence! take the Cross for a token,
Hence pass till Hallowmass!—my spell is spoken.

——

Where corpse-light
Dances bright,
Be it by day or night,
Be it by light or dark,
There shall corpse lie stiff and stark.

——

Menseful maiden ne'er should rise,
Till the first beam tinge the skies;
Silk-fringed eyelids still should close,
Till the sun has kiss'd the rose;
Maiden's foot we should not view,
Mark'd with tiny print on dew,
Till the opening flowerets spread
Carpet meet for beauty's tread.

(10)—NORNA'S INCANTATIONS

Champion, famed for warlike toil,
Art thou silent, Ribolt Troil?
Sand, and dust, and pebbly stones,
Are leaving bare thy giant bones.
Who dared touch the wild bear's skin
Ye slumber'd on, while life was in?—
A woman now, or babe, may come
And cast the covering from thy tomb.

Yet be not wrathful, Chief, nor blight
Mine eyes or ears with sound or sight!
I come not, with unhallow'd tread,
To wake the slumbers of the dead,
Or lay thy giant reliques bare;
But what I seek thou well canst spare.
Be it to my hand allow'd
To shear a merk's weight from thy shroud;
Yet leave thee sheeted lead enough
To shield thy bones from weather rough.

See, I draw my magic knife—
Never, while thou wert in life,
Laidst thou still for sloth or fear,
When point and edge were glittering near;
See, the cerements now I sever—
Waken now, or sleep for ever!
Thou wilt not wake—the deed is done!—
The prize I sought is fairly won.

Thanks, Ribolt, thanks,—for this the sea
Shall smooth its ruffled crest for thee—
And while afar its billows foam,
Subside to peace near Ribolt's tomb.
Thanks, Ribolt, thanks—for this the might
Of wild winds raging at their height,
When to thy place of slumber nigh,
Shall soften to a lullaby.

She, the dame of doubt and dread,
Norna of the Fitful-head,
Mighty in her own despite,—
Miserable in her might;
In despair and frenzy great,
In her greatness desolate;
Wisest, wickedst who lives,—
Well can keep the word she gives.

[AT INTERVIEW WITH MINNA]

Thou, so needful, yet so dread,
With cloudy crest, and wing of red;
Thou, without whose genial breath
The North would sleep the sleep of death;
Who deign'st to warm the cottage hearth,
Yet hurls proud palaces to earth,—
Brightest, keenest of the Powers,
Which form and rule this world of ours,
With my rhyme of Runic, I
Thank thee for thy agency.

Old Reimkennar, to thy art
Mother Hertha sends her part;
She, whose gracious bounty gives
Needful food for all that lives.
From the deep mine of the North
Came the mystic metal forth,
Doom'd amidst disjointed stones,
Long to cere a champion's bones,
Disinhumed my charms to aid—
Mother Earth, my thanks are paid.

Girdle of our islands dear,
Element of Water, hear!
Thou whose power can overwhelm
Broken mounds and ruin'd realm
On the lowly Belgian strand;
All thy fiercest rage can never
Of our soil a furlong sever
From our rock-defended land;
Play then gently thou thy part,
To assist old Norna's art.

Elements, each other greeting,
Gifts and power attend your meeting!

Thou, that over billows dark
Safely send'st the fisher's bark,—
Giving him a path and motion
Through the wilderness of ocean;
Thou, that when the billows brave ye,
O'er the shelves canst drive the navy,—
Didst thou chafe as one neglected,
While thy brethren were respected?
To appease thee, see, I tear
This full grasp of grizzled hair;

Oft thy breath hath through it sung,
Softening to my magic tongue,—
Now, 'tis thine to bid it fly
Through the wide expanse of sky,
'Mid the countless swarms to sail
Of wild-fowl wheeling on thy gale;
Take thy portion and rejoice,—
Spirit, thou hast heard my voice!

She who sits by haunted well,
Is subject to the Nixies' spell;
She who walks on lonely beach,
To the Mermaid's charmed speech;
She who walks round ring of green,
Offends the peevish Fairy Queen;
And she who takes rest in the Dwarfie's cave,
A weary weird of woe shall have.

By ring, by spring, by cave, by shore,
Minna Troil has braved all this and more;
And yet hath the root of her sorrow and ill,
A source that's more deep and more mystical still.—
Thou art within a demon's hold,
More wise than Heims, more strong than Trolld.
No siren sings so sweet as he,—
No fay springs lighter on the lea;
No elfin power hath half the art
To soothe, to move, to wring the heart,—
Life-blood from the cheek to drain,
Drench the eye, and dry the vein.
Maiden, ere we farther go,
Dost thou note me, ay or no?

MINNA

I mark thee, my mother, both word, look, and sign;
Speak on with thy riddle—to read it be mine.

NORNA

Mark me! for the word I speak
Shall bring the colour to thy cheek.
This leaden heart, so light of cost,
The symbol of a treasure lost,
Thou shalt wear in hope and in peace,
That the cause of your sickness and sorrow may cease,
When crimson foot meets crimson hand
In the Martyr's Aisle, and in Orkney land.—

Be patient, be patient; for Patience hath power
To ward us in danger, like mantle in shower;
A fairy gift you best may hold
In a chain of fairy gold;—
The chain and the gift are each a true token,
That not without warrant old Norna has spoken;
But thy nearest and dearest must never behold them,
Till time shall accomplish the truths I have told them.

(11)—BRYCE SNAILSFOOT'S ADVERTISEMENT

Poor sinners whom the snake deceives,
Are fain to cover them with leaves.
Zetland hath no leaves, 'tis true,
Because that trees are none, or few;
But we have flax and taits of woo',
For linen cloth and wadmaal blue;
And we have many of foreign knacks
Of finer waft, than woo' or flax.
Ye gallanty Lambmas lads appear,
And bring your Lambmas sisters here,
Bryce Snailsfoot spares not cost or care,
To pleasure every gentle pair.

1821.

ON ETTRICK FOREST'S MOUNTAINS DUN

On Ettrick Forest's mountains dun,
'Tis blithe to hear the sportsman's gun,
And seek the heath-frequenting brood
Far through the noonday solitude;
By many a cairn and trenched mound,
Where chiefs of yore sleep lone and sound,
And springs, where grey-hair'd shepherds tell,
That still the fairies love to dwell.

Along the silver streams of Tweed,
'Tis blithe the mimic fly to lead,
When to the hook the salmon springs,
And the line whistles through the rings;
The boiling eddy see him try,
Then dashing from the current high,
Till watchful eye and cautious hand
Have led his wasted strength to land.

'Tis blithe along the midnight tide,
With stalwart arm the boat to guide;
On high the dazzling blaze to rear,

And heedful plunge the barbed spear;
Rock, wood, and scaur, emerging bright,
Fling on the stream their ruddy light,
And from the bank our band appears
Like Genii, arm'd with fiery spears.

'Tis blithe at eve to tell the tale,
How we succeed, and how we fail,
Whether at Alwyn's [1] lordly meal,
Or lowlier board of Ashestiel; [2]
While the gay tapers cheerly shine,
Bickers the fire, and flows the wine—
Days free from thought, and nights from care,
My blessing on the Forest fair!

1822.

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE

Enchantress, farewell, who so oft has decoy'd me,
At the close of the evening through woodlands to roam,
Where the forester, lated, with wonder espied me,
Explore the wild scenes he was quitting for home.
Farewell, and take with thee thy numbers wild speaking
The language alternate of rapture and woe:
Oh! none but some lover, whose heart-strings are breaking,
The pang that I feel at our parting can know.

Each joy thou couldst double, and when there came sorrow,
Or pale disappointment to darken my way,
What voice was like thine, that could sing of to-morrow,
Till forgot in the strain was the grief of to-day!
But when friends drop around us in life's weary waning,
The grief, Queen of Numbers, thou canst not assuage;
Nor the gradual estrangement of those yet remaining,
The languor of pain, and the chillness of age.

'Twas thou that once taught me, in accents bewailing,
To sing how a warrior lay stretch'd on the plain,
And a maiden hung o'er him with aid unavailing,
And held to his lips the cold goblet in vain;
As vain thy enchantments, O Queen of wild Numbers,
To a bard when the reign of his fancy is o'er,
And the quick pulse of feeling in apathy slumbers—
Farewell, then, Enchantress! I meet thee no more!

1822.

[1] *Alwyn*, the seat of the Lord Somerville; now, alas! untenanted, by the lamented death of that kind and hospitable nobleman, the author's nearest neighbour and intimate friend. Lord S. died in February 1819.

[2] *Ashestiel*, the poet's residence at that time.

THE MAID OF ISLA

AIR—"*The Maid of Isla*"

WRITTEN FOR MR. GEORGE THOMSON'S SCOTTISH MELODIES

Oh, Maid of Isla, from the cliff,
That looks on troubled wave and sky,
Dost thou not see yon little skiff
Contend with ocean gallantly?
Now beating 'gainst the breeze and surge,
And steep'd her leeward deck in foam,
Why does she war unequal urge?—
Oh, Isla's maid, she seeks her home.

Oh, Isla's maid, yon sea-bird mark,
Her white wing gleams through mist and spray,
Against the storm-cloud, lowering dark,
As to the rock she wheels away;—
Where clouds are dark and billows rave,
Why to the shelter should she come
Of cliff, exposed to wind and wave?—
Oh, maid of Isla, 'tis her home!

As breeze and tide to yonder skiff,
Thou'rt adverse to the suit I bring,
And cold as is yon wintry cliff,
Where sea-birds close their wearied wing.
Yet cold as rock, unkind as wave,
Still, Isla's maid, to thee I come;
For in thy love, or in his grave,
Must Allan Vourich find his home.

1822.

CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME[1]

BEING NEW WORDS TO AN AULD SPRING

PART FIRST

The news has flown frae mouth to mouth,
The North for ance has bang'd the South;
The deil a Scotsman's die o' drouth,
Carle, now the King's come!

[1] This imitation of an old Jacobite ditty was written on the appearance, in the Frith of Forth, of the fleet which conveyed his Majesty King George the Fourth to Scotland, in August 1822; and was published as a broadside.

CHORUS

Carle, now the King's come!
Carle, now the King's come!
Thou shalt dance, and I will sing,
Carle, now the King's come!

Auld England held him lang and fast;
And Ireland had a joyfu' cast;
But Scotland's turn is come at last—
Carle, now the King's come!

Auld Reekie, in her rokelay grey,
Thought never to have seen the day;
He's been a weary time away—
But, Carle, now the King's come!

She's skirling frae the Castle-hill;
The Carline's voice is grown sae shrill,
Ye'll hear her at the Canon-mill—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Up, bairns!" she cries, "baith grit and sma',
And busk ye for the weapon-shaw!
Stand by me, and we'll bang them a'—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come from Newbattle's ancient spires,
Bauld Lothian, with your knights and squires,
And match the mettle of your sires—
Carle, now the King's come!

"You're welcome hame, my Montagu!
Bring in your hand the young Buccleuch;
I'm missing some that I may rue—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come, Haddington, the kind and gay,
You've graced my causeway mony a day;
I'll weep the cause if you should stay—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come, premier Duke, and carry doun
Frae yonder craig his ancient croun;
It's had a lang sleep and a soun'—
But, Carle, now the King's come!

"Come, Athole, from the hill and wood,
Bring down your clansmen like a clud;
Come, Morton, show the Douglas' blood,—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come, Tweeddale, true as sword to sheath;
Come, Hopetoun, fear'd on fields of death;
Come, Clerk, and give your bugle breath;
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come, Wemyss, who modest merit aids;
Come, Rosebery, from Dalmeny shades;
Breadalbane, bring your belted plaids;
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come, stately Niddrie, auld and true,
Girt with the sword that Minden knew;
We have o'er few such lairds as you—
Carle, now the King's come!

"King Arthur's grown a common crier,
He's heard in Fife and far Cantire,—
'Fie, lads, behold my crest of fire!'
Carle, now the King's come!

"Saint Abb roars out, 'I see him pass,
Between Tantallon and the Bass!'
Calton, get out your keeking-glass—
Carle, now the King's come!"

The Carline stopp'd; and, sure I am,
For very glee had ta'en a dwam,
But Oman help'd her to a dram.—
Cogie, now the King's come!

Cogie, now the King's come!
Cogie, now the King's come!
I'se be fou' and ye's be toom,
Cogie, now the King's come!

PART SECOND

A Hawick gill of mountain dew,
Heised up Auld Reekie's heart, I trow,
It minded her of Waterloo—
Carle, now the King's come!

Again I heard her summons swell,
For, sic a dirdum and a yell,
It drown'd Saint Giles's jowing bell—
Carle, now the King's come!

"My trusty Provost, tried and tight,
Stand forward for the Good Town's right,
There's waur than you been made a knight—
Carle, now the King's come!

"My reverend Clergy, look ye say
The best of thanksgivings ye ha'e,
And warstle for a sunny day—
Carle, now the King's come!

"My Doctors, look that you agree,
Cure a' the town without a fee;
My Lawyers, dinna pike a plea—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come forth each sturdy Burgher's bairn,
That dints on wood or clanks on airn,
That fires the o'en, or winds the pirn—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Come forward with the Blanket Blue,
Your sires were loyal men and true,
As Scotland's foemen oft might rue—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Scots downa loup, and rin, and rave,
We're steady folks and something grave,
We'll keep the causeway firm and brave—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Sir Thomas, thunder from your rock,
Till Pentland dinnles wi' the shock,
And lace wi' fire my snood o' smoke—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Melville, bring out your bands of blue,
A' Louden lads, baith stout and true,
With Elcho, Hope, and Cockburn, too—
Carle, now the King's come!

"And you, who on yon bluidy braes
Compell'd the vanquished Despot's praise,
Rank out—rank out—my gallant Greys—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Cock o' the North, my Huntly bra',
Where are you with the Forty-twa?"
Ah! wae's my heart that ye're awa'—
Carle, now the King's come!

"But yonder come my canty Celts,
With durk and pistols at their belts,
Thank God, we've still some plaids and kilts—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Lord, how the pibrochs groan and yell!
Macdonnell's ta'en the field himsell,
Macleod comes branking o'er the fell—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Bend up your bow each Archer spark,
For you're to guard him light and dark;
Faith, lads, for ance ye've hit the mark—
Carle, now the King's come;

"Young Errol, take the sword of state,
The sceptre, Panie-Morarchate;
Knight Mareschal, see ye clear the gate—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Kind cummer, Leith, ye've been mis-set,
But dinna be upon the fret—
Ye'se hae the handsel of him yet,
Carle, now the King's come!

"My daughters, come with een sae blue,
Your garlands weave, your blossoms strew;
He ne'er saw fairer flowers than you—
Carle, now the King's come!

"What shall we do for the propine—
We used to offer something fine,
But ne'er a groat's in pouch of mine—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Deil care—for that I'se never start,
We'll welcome him with Highland heart;
Whate'er we have he's get a part—
Carle, now the King's come!

"I'll show him mason-work this day—
Nane of your bricks of Babel clay,
But towers shall stand till Time's away—
Carle, now the King's come!

"I'll show him wit, I'll show him lair,
And gallant lads and lasses fair,
And what wad kind heart wish for mair?—
Carle, now the King's come!

"Step out, Sir John, of projects rife,
Come win the thanks of an auld wife,
And bring him health and length of life—
Carle, now the King's come!"

1822.

FROM "QUENTIN DURWARD"

SONG—COUNTY GUY

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who thrill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade,
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence know—
But where is County Guy!

1823.

THE BANNATYNE CLUB[1]

I. Assist me, ye friends of Old Books and Old Wine,
To sing in the praises of sage Bannatyne,
Who left such a treasure of old Scottish lore
As enables each age to print one volume more.
One volume more, my friends, one volume more,
We'll ransack old Banny for one volume more.

II. And first, Allan Ramsay, was eager to glean
From Bannatyne's *Hortus* his bright Evergreen;
Two bright little volumes (intended for four)
Still leave us the task to print one volume more.
One volume more, etc.

III. His ways were not ours, for he cared not a pin
How much he left out, or how much he put in;
The truth of the reading he thought was a bore,
So this accurate age calls for one volume more.
One volume more, etc.

[1] Sir Walter Scott was the first President of the Club, and wrote these verses for the anniversary dinner of March, 1823.

IV. Correct and sagacious, then came my Lord Hailes,
And weigh'd every letter in critical scales,
But left out some brief words, which the prudish abhor
And castrated Banny in one volume more.
One volume more, my friends, one volume more;
We'll restore Banny's manhood in one volume more.

V. John Pinkerton next, and I'm truly concern'd
I can't call that worthy so candid as learn'd;
He rail'd at the plaid and blasphemed the claymore,
And set Scots by the ears in his one volume more,
One volume more, my friends, one volume more,
Celt and Goth shall be pleased with one volume more.

VI. As bitter as gall, and as sharp as a razor,
And feeding on herbs as a Nebuchadnezzar,
His diet too acid, his temper too sour,
Little Ritson came out with his two volumes more.
But one volume, my friends, one volume more,
We'll dine on roast-beef and print one volume more.

VII. The stout Gothic yeditur, next on the roll,
With his beard like a brush and as black as a coal;
And honest Greysteel that was true to the core,
Lent their hearts and their hands each to one volume more.
One volume more, etc.

VIII. Since by these single champions what wonders were done,
What may not be achieved by our Thirty and One?
Law, Gospel, and Commerce, we count in our corps,
And the Trade and the Press join for one volume more.
One volume more, etc.

IX. Ancient libels and contraband books, I assure ye,
We'll print as secure from Exchequer or Jury;
Then hear your Committee and let them count o'er
The Chiels they intend in their three volumes more.
Three volumes more, etc.

X. They'll produce you King Jamie, the sapient and Sext,
And the Rob of Dumblane and her Bishops come next,
One tome miscellaneous they'll add to your store,
Resolving next year to print four volumes more.
Four volumes more, my friends, four volumes more;
Pay down your subscriptions for four volumes more.

1823.

TO J. E. LOCKHART, Esq.

ON THE COMPOSITION OF MAIDA'S EPITAPH

"Maidæ Marmorea dormis sub-imagine Maida!
Ad januam domini sit tibi terra levis."

"Dear John,—I some time ago wrote to inform his
Fat worship of *jaces*, misprinted for *dormis*;
But that several Southrons assured me the *januam*
Was a twitch to both ears of Ass Priscian's cranium.
You, perhaps, may observe that one Lionel Berguer,
In defence of our blunder appears a stout arguer:
But at length I have settled, I hope, all these clatters,
By a *rowt* in the papers—fine place for such matters.
I have, therefore, to make it for once my command, sir,
That my gudeson shall leave the whole thing in my hand, sir,
And by no means accomplish what James says you threaten,
Some banter in Blackwood to claim your dog-Latin.
I have various reasons of weight, on my word, sir,
For pronouncing a step of this sort were absurd, sir.—
Firstly, erudite sir, 'twas against your advising
I adopted the lines this monstrosity lies in;
For you modestly hinted my English translation
Would become better far such a dignified station.
Second—how, in God's name, would my bacon be saved,
By not having writ what I clearly engraved?
On the contrary, I, on the whole, think it better
To be whipped as the thief, than his lousy resetter.
Thirdly—don't you perceive that I don't care a boddle
Although fifty false metres were flung at my noddle,
For my back is as broad and as hard as Benlomon's,
And I treat as I please both the Greeks and the Romans;
Whereas the said heathens might rather look serious
At a kick on their drum from the scribe of Valerius.
And, fourthly and lastly—it is my good pleasure
To remain the sole source of that murderous measure.
So *stet pro ratione voluntas*—be tractile,
Invade not, I say, my own dear little dactyl;
If you do, you'll occasion a breach in our intercourse:
To-morrow will see me in town for the winter-course,
But not at your door, at the usual hour, sir,
My own pye-house daughter's good prog to devour, sir.
Ergo—peace!—on your duty, your squeamishness throttle,
And we'll soothe Priscian's spleen with a canny third bottle.
A fig for all dactyls, a fig for all spondees,
A fig for all dunces and dominie Grundys;

A fig for dry thrapples, south, north, east, and west, sir,
Speates and raxes ere five for a famishing guest, sir;
And as Fatsman [1] and I have some topics for haver, he'll
Be invited, I hope, to meet me and Dame Peveril,
Upon whom, to say nothing of Oury and Anne, you
Dog shall be deemed if you fasten your *Janua*."

1824.

LINES ADDRESSED TO MONSIEUR ALEXANDRE, THE CELEBRATED VENTRILOQUIST

Of yore, in old England, it was not thought good
To carry two visages under one hood;
What should folk say to *you?* who have faces such plenty,
That from under one hood, you last night show'd us twenty!
Stand forth, arch deceiver, and tell us in truth,
Are you handsome or ugly, in age or in youth?
Man, woman, or child—a dog or a mouse?
Or are you, at once, each live thing in the house?
Each live thing, did I ask?—each dead implement, too,
A work-shop in your person,—saw, chisel, and screw!
Above all, are you one individual? I know
You must be at least Alexandre and Co.
But I think you're a troop—an assemblage—a mob,
And that I, as the Sheriff, should take up the job;
And instead of rehearsing your wonders in verse,
Must read you the Riot-Act, and bid you disperse.

ABBOTSFORD, *23rd April*, 1824.

EPILOGUE TO THE DRAMA FOUNDED ON "ST. RONAN'S WELL"

"After the play, the following humorous address (ascribed to an eminent literary character), was spoken with infinite effect by Mr. Mackay in the character of *Meg Dodds*."—*Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, 9th June, 1824.

Enter MEG DODDS, *encircled by a crowd of unruly boys, whom a town's-officer is driving off.*

That's right, friend—drive the gaitlings back,
And lend yon muckle ane a whack;
Your Embro' bairns are grown a pack,
Sae proud and saucy,
They scarce will let an auld wife walk
Upon your causey.

[1] *Fatsman* was one of Mr. James Ballantyne's many *aliases*.

I've seen the day they would been scaur'd,
Wi' the Tolbooth, or wi' the Guard,
Or maybe wud hae some regard
For Jamie Laing—[1]
The Water-hole [2] was right weel wared
On sic a gang.

But whar's the gude Tolbooth [3] gane now?
Whar's the auld Claught,[4] wi' red and blue?
Whar's Jamie Laing? and whar's John Doo? [5]
And whar's the Weigh-house? [6]
Deil hae't I see but what is new,
Except the Playhouse!

Yoursells are changed frae head to heel,
There's some that gar the causeway reel
With clashing hufe and rattling wheel,
And horses canterin',
Wha's fathers daunder'd hame as weel
Wi' lass and lantern.

Mysell being in the public line,
I look for howfs I kenn'd lang syne,
Whar gentles used to drink gude wine,
And eat cheap dinners;
But deil a soul gangs there to dine,
Of saints or sinners!

Fortune's [7] and Hunter's [8] gane, alas!
And Bayle's [9] is lost in empty space;

[1] James Laing was one of the Depute-Clerks of the city of Edinburgh, and a constant terror to evildoers.

[2] The Watch-hole.

[3] The Tolbooth of Edinburgh, The Heart of Mid-Lothian, was pulled down in 1817.

[4] The ancient Town Guard. The reduced remnant of this body of police was finally disbanded in 1817.

[5] John Doo, or Dhu—a terrific-looking and high-spirited member of the Town Guard, and of whom there is a print by Kay, etched in 1784.

[6] The Weigh-House, situated at the head of the West Bow, Lawnmarket, and which had long been looked upon as an encumbrance to the street, was demolished in order to make way for the royal procession to the Castle, which took place on the 22nd of August, 1822.

[7] Fortune's Tavern—a house on the west side of the Old Stamp Office Close, High Street, and which was, in the early part of the last century, the mansion of the Earl of Eglintoun. The Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the day held his levees and dinners in this tavern.

[8] Hunter's—another once much-frequented tavern, in Writer's Court, Royal Exchange.

[9] Bayle's Tavern and Coffeehouse, originally on the North Bridge, east side, afterwards in Shakspeare Square, but removed to admit of the opening of Waterloo Place. Such was the dignified character of this house, that the waiter always appeared in full dress, and nobody was admitted who had not a white neckcloth—then considered an indispensable insignium of a gentleman.

And now if folk would splice a brace,
Or crack a bottle,
They gang to a new-fangled place
They ca' a Hottle.

The deevil hottle them for Meg!
They are sae greedy and sae gleg,
That if ye're served but wi' an egg,
(And that's puir pickin',)
In comes a chiel and makes a leg,
And charges chicken!

"And wha may ye be," gin ye speer,
"That brings your auld-warld clavers here?"
Troth, if there's onybody near
That kens the roads,
I'll haud ye Burgundy to beer,
He kens Meg Dodds.

I came a piece frae west o' Currie;
And, since I see you're in a hurry,
Your patience I'll nae langer worry,
But be sae crouse
As speak a word for ane Will Murray,[1]
That keeps this house.

Plays are auld-fashion'd things, in truth,
And ye've seen wonders mair uncouth;
Yet actors shouldna suffer drouth,
Or want of dramock,
Although they speak but wi' their mouth,
Not with their stamock.

But ye tak care of a' folk's pantry;
And surely to hae stooden sentry
Ower this big house, (that's far frae rent-free,)
For a lone sister,
Is claims as gude's to be a ventri—
How'st ca'd—loquister.

Weel, sirs, gude'en, and have a care,
The bairns mak fun o' Meg nae mair;
For gin they do, she tells you fair,
And without failzie,
As sure as ever ye sit there,
She'll tell the Bailie.

1824.

[1] Manager of the Edinburgh Theatre.

EPILOGUE TO A PLAY

The sages—for authority, pray look
Seneca's morals, or the copy-book—
The sages to disparage woman's power,
Say, beauty is a fair, but fading flower;—
I cannot tell—I've small philosophy—
Yet, if it fades, it does not surely die,
But, like the violet, when decay'd in bloom,
Survives through many a year in rich perfume.
Witness our theme to-night, two ages gone,
A third wanes fast, since Mary fill'd the throne.
Brief was her bloom, with scarce one sunny day,
'Twixt Pinkie's field and fatal Fotheringay:
But when, while Scottish hearts and blood you boast,
Shall sympathy with Mary's woes be lost?
O'er Mary's mem'ry the learn'd quarrel,
By Mary's grave the poet plants his laurel,
Time's echo, old tradition, makes her name
The constant burden of his fault'ring theme;
In each old hall his grey-hair'd heralds tell
Of Mary's picture, and of Mary's cell,
And show—my fingers tingle at the thought—
The loads of tapestry which that poor Queen wrought,
In vain did fate bestow a double dower
Of ev'ry ill that waits on rank and pow'r,
Of ev'ry ill on beauty that attends—
False ministers, false lovers, and false friends.
Spite of three wedlocks so completely curst,
They rose in ill from bad to worse, and worst,
In spite of errors—I dare not say more,
For Duncan Targe lays hand on his claymore.
In spite of all, however, humours vary,
There is a talisman in that word Mary,
That unto Scottish bosoms all and some
Is found the genuine *open sesamum!*
In history, ballad, poetry, or novel,
It charms alike the castle and the hovel,
Even you—forgive me—who, demure and shy,
Gorge not each bait, nor stir at every fly,
Must rise to this, else in her ancient reign
The Rose of Scotland has survived in vain.

1824.

FROM "REDGAUNTLET"

As lords their labourers' hire delay,
Fate quits our toil with hopes to come,
Which, if far short of present pay,
Still owns a debt and names a sum.

Quit not the pledge, frail sufferer, then,
Although a distant date be given;
Despair is treason towards man,
And blasphemy to Heaven.

1824.

FROM "THE BETROTHED"

(1)—SONG—SOLDIER WAKE

I. Soldier, wake—the day is peeping,
Honour ne'er was won in sleeping,
Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill:
'Tis when they are glinted back
From axe and armour, spear and jack,
That they promise future story
Many a page of deathless glory.
Shields that are the foeman's terror,
Ever are the morning's mirror.

II. Arm and up—the morning beam
Hath call'd the rustic to his team,
Hath call'd the falc'ner to the lake,
Hath call'd the huntsman to the brake;
The early student ponders o'er
His dusty tomes of ancient lore.
Soldier, wake—thy harvest, fame;
Thy study, conquest; war, thy game.
Shield, that would be foeman's terror,
Still should gleam the morning's mirror.

III. Poor hire repays the rustic's pain;
More paltry still the sportsman's gain:
Vainest of all the student's theme
Ends in some metaphysic dream:
Yet each is up, and each has toil'd
Since first the peep of dawn has smiled;
And each is eagerer in his aim
Than he who barters life for fame.
Up, up, and arm thee, son of terror!
Be thy bright shield the morning's mirror.

(2)—SONG—THE TRUTH OF WOMAN

I. Woman's faith, and woman's trust—
Write the characters in dust;
Stamp them on the running stream,
Print them on the moon's pale beam,
And each evanescent letter
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the thing those letters mean.

II. I have strain'd the spider's thread
'Gainst the promise of a maid;
I have weigh'd a grain of sand
'Gainst her plight of heart and hand;
I told my true love of the token,
How her faith proved light, and her word was broken:
Again her word and truth she plight,
And I believed them again ere night.

(3)—SONG—I ASKED OF MY HARP

I ask'd of my harp, "Who hath injured thy chords?"
And she replied, "The crooked finger, which I mocked in my tune,"
A blade of silver may be bended—a blade of steel abideth—
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

The sweet taste of mead passeth from the lips,
But they are long corroded by the juice of wormwood;
The lamb is brought to the shambles, but the wolf rangeth the mountain;
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

I ask'd the red-hot iron, when it glimmer'd on the anvil,
"Wherefore glowest thou longer than the firebrand?"
"I was born in the dark mine, and the brand in the pleasant greenwood."
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

I ask'd the green oak of the assembly, wherefore its boughs were dry and sear'd like the horns of the stag;
And it show'd me that a small worm had gnaw'd its roots.
The boy who remembered the scourge, undid the wicket of the castle at midnight.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

Lightning destroyeth temples, though their spires pierce the clouds;
Storms destroy armadas, though their sails intercept the gale.
He that is in his glory falleth, and that by a contemptible enemy.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

1825.

FROM "THE TALISMAN"

(1)—AHRIMAN

Dark Ahriman, whom Irak still
Holds origin of woe and ill!
When, bending at thy shrine,
We view the world with troubled eye,
Where see we 'neath the extended sky,
An empire matching thine!

If the Benigner Power can yield
A fountain in the desert field,
Where weary pilgrims drink;
Thine are the waves that lash the rock,
Thine the tornado's deadly shock,
Where countless navies sink!

Or if He bid the soil dispense
Balsams to cheer the sinking sense,
How few can they deliver
From lingering pains, or pang intense,
Red Fever, spotted Pestilence,
The arrows of thy quiver!

Chief in Man's bosom sits thy sway,
And frequent, while in words we pray
Before another throne,
Whate'er of specious form be there,
The secret meaning of the prayer
Is, Ahriman, thine own.

Say, hast thou feeling, sense, and form,
Thunder thy voice, thy garments storm,
As Eastern Magi say;
With sentient soul of hate and wrath,
And wings to sweep thy deadly path,
And fangs to tear thy prey?

Or art thou mix'd in Nature's source,
An ever-operating force,
  Converting good to ill;
An evil principle innate,
Contending with our better fate,
  And oh! victorious still?

Howe'er it be, dispute is vain,
On all without thou hold'st thy reign,
  Nor less on all within;
Each mortal passion's fierce career,
Love, hate, ambition, joy, and fear,
  Thou goadest into sin.

Whene'er a sunny gleam appears,
To brighten up our vale of tears,
  Thou art not distant far;
'Mid such brief solace of our lives,
Thou whett'st our very banquet-knives
  To tools of death and war.

Thus, from the moment of our birth,
Long as we linger on the earth,
  Thou rul'st the fate of men;
Thine are the pangs of life's last hour,
And—who dare answer?—is thy power,
  Dark Spirit! ended THEN?

(2)—SONG OF BLONDEL—THE BLOODY VEST

'Twas near the fair city of Benevent,
When the sun was setting on bough and bent,
And knights were preparing in bower and tent,
On the eve of the Baptist's tournament;
When in Lincoln green a stripling gent,
Well seeming a page by a princess sent,
Wander'd the camp, and, still as he went,
Enquired for the Englishman, Thomas a Kent.

Far hath he fared, and farther must fare,
Till he finds his pavilion nor stately nor rare,—
Little save iron and steel was there;
And, as lacking the coin to pay armourer's care,
With his sinewy arms to the shoulders bare,
The good knight with hammer and file did repair
The mail that to-morrow must see him wear,
For the honour of Saint John and his lady fair.

"Thus speaks my lady," the page said he,
And the knight bent lowly both head and knee,
"She is Benevent's Princess so high in degree,
And thou art as lowly as knight may well be—
He that would climb so lofty a tree,
Or spring such a gulf as divides her from thee,
Must dare some high deed, by which all men may see
His ambition is back'd by his high chivalrie.

"Therefore thus speaks my lady," the fair page he said,
And the knight lowly louted with hand and with head,
"Fling aside the good armour in which thou art clad,
And don thou this weed of her night-gear instead,
For a hauberk of steel, a kirtle of thread:
And charge, thus attired, in the tournament dread,
And fight as thy wont is where most blood is shed,
And bring honour away, or remain with the dead."

Untroubled in his look, and untroubled in his breast,
The knight the weed hath taken, and reverently hath kiss'd:
"Now bless'd be the moment, the messenger be blest!
Much honour'd do I hold me in my lady's high behest;
And say unto my lady, in this dear night-weed dress'd,
To the best arm'd champion I will not veil my crest;
But if I live and bear me well 'tis her turn to take the test."
Here, gentles, ends the foremost fytte of the Lay of the Bloody Vest.

FYTTE SECOND

The Baptist's fair morrow beheld gallant feats—
There was winning of honour, and losing of seats—
There was hewing with falchions, and splintering of staves,
The victors won glory, the vanquish'd won graves.
O, many a knight there fought bravely and well,
Yet one was accounted his peers to excel,
And 'twas he whose sole armour on body and breast,
Seem'd the weed of a damsel when boune for her rest.

There were some dealt him wounds that were bloody and sore,
But others respected his plight, and forebore.
"It is some oath of honour," they said, "and I trow
'Twere unknightly to slay him achieving his vow."
Then the Prince, for his sake, bade the tournament cease,
He flung down his warder, the trumpets sung peace;
And the judges declare, and competitors yield,
That the Knight of the Night-gear was first in the field.

The feast it was nigh, and the mass it was nigher,
When before the fair Princess low louted a squire,
And deliver'd a garment unseemly to view,
With sword-cut and spear-thrust, all hack'd and pierced through;
All rent and all tatter'd, all clotted with blood,
With foam of the horses, with dust, and with mud,
Not the point of that lady's small finger, I ween,
Could have rested on spot was unsullied and clean.

"This token my master, Sir Thomas a Kent,
Restores to the Princess of fair Benevent;
He that climbs the tall tree has won right to the fruit,
He that leaps the wide gulf should prevail in his suit;
Through life's utmost peril the prize I have won,
And now must the faith of my mistress be shown:
For she who prompts knights on such danger to run,
Must avouch his true service in front of the sun.

"'I restore,' says my master, 'the garment I've worn,
And I claim of the Princess to don it in turn;
For its stains and its rents she should prize it the more,
Since by shame 'tis unsullied, though crimson'd with gore."
Then deep blush'd the Princess—yet kiss'd she and press'd
The blood-spotted robes to her lips and her breast.
"Go tell my true knight, church and chamber shall show,
If I value the blood on this garment or no."

And when it was time for the nobles to pass,
In solemn procession to minster and mass,
The first walk'd the Princess in purple and pall,
But the blood-besmear'd night-robe she wore over all;
And eke, in the hall, where they all sat at dine
When she knelt to her father and proffer'd the wine,
Over all her rich robes and state jewels, she wore
That wimple unseemly bedabbled with gore.

Then lords whisper'd ladies, as well you may think,
And ladies replied, with nod, titter, and wink;
And the Prince, who in anger and shame had look'd down,
Turn'd at length to his daughter, and spoke with a frown:
"Now since thou hast publish'd thy folly and guilt,
E'en atone with thy hand for the blood thou hast spilt;
Yet sore for your boldness you both will repent,
When you wander as exiles from fair Benevent."

Then out spoke stout Thomas, in hall where he stood,
Exhausted and feeble, but dauntless of mood:
"The blood that I lost for this daughter of thine,

I pour'd forth as freely as flask gives its wine;
And if for my sake she brooks penance and blame,
Do not doubt I will save her from suffering and shame;
And light will she reck of thy princedom and rent,
When I hail her, in England, the Countess of Kent."

LIFE OF NAPOLEON

While Scott was writing the *Life of Napoleon*, Lockhart says—"The rapid accumulation of books and MSS. was at once flattering and alarming; and one of his notes to me, about the middle of June, had these rhymes by way of postscript:—

When with Poetry dealing
Room enough in a shieling:
Neither cabin nor hovel
Too small for a novel:
Though my back I should rub
On Diogenes' tub,
How my fancy could prance
In a dance of romance!
But my house I must swap
With some Brobdignag chap,
Ere I grapple, God bless me! with Emperor Nap

June, 1825.

FROM "WOODSTOCK"

AN HOUR WITH THEE

An hour with thee!—When earliest day
Dapples with gold the eastern grey,
Oh, what can frame my mind to bear
The toil and turmoil, cark and care,
New griefs, which coming hours unfold,
And sad remembrance of the old?
One hour with thee.

One hour with thee!—When burning June
Waves his red flag at pitch of noon;
What shall repay the faithful swain,
His labour on the sultry plain;
And more than cave or sheltering bough,
Cool feverish blood, and throbbing brow?—
One hour with thee.

One hour with thee!—When sun is set,
O, what can teach me to forget
The thankless labours of the day;
The hopes, the wishes, flung away;
The increasing wants, and lessening gains,
The master's pride, who scorns my pains?—
One hour with thee.

1826.

LINES TO SIR CUTHBERT SHARP

Forget thee? No! my worthy fere!
Forget blithe mirth and gallant cheer!
Death sooner stretch me on my bier!
Forget thee? No.

Forget the universal shout
When "canny Sunderland" spoke out—
A truth which knaves affect to doubt—
Forget thee? No.

Forget you? No—though now-a-day
I've heard your knowing people say,
Disown the debt you cannot pay,
You'll find it far the thriftiest way—
But I?—O no.

Forget your kindness found for all room,
In what, though large, seem'd still a small room,
Forget my *Surtees* in a ball-room—
Forget you? No.

Forget your sprightly dumpty-diddles,
And beauty tripping to the fiddles,
Forget my lovely friends the *Liddells*—
Forget you? No.

1827.

FROM "THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH"

(1)—THE LAY OF POOR LOUISE

Ah, poor Louise! the livelong day
She roams from cot to castle gay;
And still her voice and viol say,
Ah, maids, beware the woodland way,
Think on Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The sun was high,
It smirch'd her cheek, it dimm'd her eye,
The woodland walk was cool and nigh,
Where birds with chiming streamlets vie
To cheer Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The savage bear
Made ne'er that lovely grove his lair;
The wolves molest not paths so fair—
But better far had such been there
For poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! In woody wold
She met a huntsman fair and bold;
His baldric was of silk and gold,
And many a witching tale he told
To poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! Small cause to pine
Hadst thou for treasures of the mine;
For peace of mind that gift divine,
And spotless innocence, were thine,
Ah, poor Louise!

Ah, poor Louise! Thy treasure's reft!
I know not if by force or theft,
Or part by violence, part by gift;
But misery is all that's left
To poor Louise.

Let poor Louise some succour have!
She will not long your bounty crave,
Or tire the gay with warning stave—
For Heaven has grace, and earth a grave
Poor poor Louise.

(2)—DEATH CHANT

I. Viewless Essence, thin and bare,
Well nigh melted into air;
Still with fondness hovering near
The earthly form thou once didst wear;

II. Pause upon thy pinion's flight,
Be thy course to left or right;
Be thou doom'd to soar or sink,
Pause upon the awful brink.

III. To avenge the deed expelling
Thee untimely from thy dwelling,
Mystic force thou shalt retain
O'er the blood and o'er the brain.

IV. When the form thou shalt espy
That darken'd on thy closing eye;
When the footstep thou shalt hear,
That thrill'd upon thy dying ear;

V. Then strange sympathies shall wake,
The flesh shall thrill, the nerves shall quake;
The wounds renew their clotter'd flood,
And every drop cry blood for blood.

(3)—SONG OF THE GLEE-MAIDEN

I. Yes, thou mayst sigh,
And look once more at all around,
At stream and bank, and sky and ground.
Thy life its final course has found,
And thou must die.

II. Yes, lay thee down,
And while thy struggling pulses flutter,
Bid the grey monk his soul-mass mutter,
And the deep bell its death-tone utter—
Thy life is gone.

III. Be not afraid.
'Tis but a pang, and then a thrill,
A fever fit, and then a chill;
And then an end of human ill,
For thou art dead.

1828.

THE DEATH OF KEELDAR

Percy or Percival Rede of Trochend, in Redesdale, Northumberland, is celebrated in tradition as a huntsman and a soldier. He was, upon two occasions, singularly unfortunate; once, when an arrow, which he had discharged at a deer, killed his celebrated dog Keeldar; and again, when, being on a hunting party, he was betrayed into the hands of a clan called Crossar, by whom he was murdered. Mr. Cooper's painting of the first of these incidents, suggested the following stanzas.

Up rose the sun, o'er moor and mead;
Up with the sun rose Percy Rede;
Brave Keeldar, from his couples freed,
Career'd along the lea;

The Palfrey sprung with sprightly bound,
As if to match the gamesome hound;
His horn the gallant huntsman wound:
They were a jovial three!

Man, hound, or horse, of higher fame,
To wake the wild deer never came,
Since Alnwick's Earl pursued the game
On Cheviot's rueful day;
Keeldar was matchless in his speed,
Than Tarras, ne'er was stancher steed,
A peerless archer, Percy Rede:
And right dear friends were they.

The chase engross'd their joys and woes,
Together at the dawn they rose,
Together shared the noon's repose,
By fountain or by stream;
And oft, when evening skies were red,
The heather was their common bed,
Where each, as wildering fancy led,
Still hunted in his dream.

Now is the thrilling moment near,
Of sylvan hope and sylvan fear,
Yon thicket holds the harbour'd deer,
The signs the hunters know;—
With eyes of flame, and quivering ears,
The brake sagacious Keeldar nears;
The restless palfrey paws and rears;
The archer strings his bow.

The game's afoot!—Halloo! Halloo!
Hunter, and horse, and hound pursue;—
But woe the shaft that erring flew—
That e'er it left the string!
And ill betide the faithless yew!
The stag bounds scatheless o'er the dew,
And gallant Keeldar's life-blood true
Has drench'd the grey-goose wing.

The noble hound—he dies, he dies,
Death, death has glazed his fixed eyes,
Stiff on the bloody heath he lies,
Without a groan or quiver.
Now day may break and bugle sound,
And whoop and hollow ring around,
And o'er his couch the stag may bound,
But Keeldar sleeps for ever.

Dilated nostrils, staring eyes,
Mark the poor palfrey's mute surprise,
He knows not that his comrade dies,
Nor what is death—but still
His aspect hath expression drear
Of grief and wonder, mix'd with fear,
Like startled children when they hear
Some mystic tale of ill.

But he that bent the fatal bow,
Can well the sum of evil know,
And o'er his favourite, bending low,
In speechless grief recline;
Can think he hears the senseless clay,
In unreproachful accents say,
"The hand that took my life away,
Dear master, was it thine?

"And if it be, the shaft be bless'd,
Which sure some erring aim address'd,
Since in your service prized, caress'd
I in your service die;
And you may have a fleeter hound,
To match the dun-deer's merry bound,
But by your couch will ne'er be found
So true a guard as I."

And to his last stout Percy rued
The fatal chance, for when he stood
'Gainst fearful odds in deadly feud,
And fell amid the fray,
E'en with his dying voice he cried,
"Had Keeldar but been at my side,
Your treacherous ambush had been spied—
I had not died to-day!"

Remembrance of the erring bow
Long since had join'd the tides which flow,
Conveying human bliss and woe
Down dark oblivion's river;
But Art can Time's stern doom arrest,
And snatch his spoil from Lethe's breast,
And, in her Cooper's colours drest,
The scene shall live for ever.

1828.

FROM "ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN"

(1)—THE SECRET TRIBUNAL

Measurers of good and evil,
Bring the square, the line, the level,—
Rear the altar, dig the trench,
Blood both stone and ditch shall drench
Cubits six, from end to end,
Must the fatal bench extend,—
Cubits six, from side to side,
Judge and culprit must divide.
On the east the Court assembles,
On the west the Accused trembles—
Answer, brethren, all and one,
Is the ritual rightly done?

———

On life and soul, on blood and bone,
One for all, and all for one,
We warrant this is rightly done.

———

How wears the night?—Doth morning shine
In early radiance on the Rhine?
What music floats upon his tide?
Do birds the tardy morning chide?
Brethren, look out from hill and height,
And answer true, how wears the night?

———

The night is old; on Rhine's broad breast
Glance drowsy stars which long to rest.
No beams are twinkling in the east.
There is a voice upon the flood,
The stern still call of blood for blood;
'Tis time we listen the behest.

———

Up, then, up! When day's at rest,
'Tis time that such as we are watchers;
Rise to judgment, brethren, rise!
Vengeance knows not sleepy eyes,
He and night are matchers.

1829.

(2)—TOLL, TOLL THE BELL

Toll, toll the bell!
Greatness is o'er,
The heart has broke,
To ache no more;
An unsubstantial pageant all—
Drop o'er the scene the funeral pall.

THE FORAY

The last of our steers on the board has been spread,
And the last flask of wine in our goblet is red;
Up! up, my brave kinsmen! belt swords and begone,
There are dangers to dare, and there's spoil to be won.

The eyes, that so lately mix'd glances with ours,
For a space must be dim, as they gaze from the towers,
And strive to distinguish through tempest and gloom,
The prance of the steel, and the toss of the plume.

The rain is descending; the wind rises loud;
And the moon her red beacon has veil'd with a cloud;
'Tis the better, my mates! for the warder's dull eye
Shall in confidence slumber, nor dream we are nigh.

Our steeds are impatient! I hear my blithe Grey!
There is life in his hoof-clang, and hope in his neigh;
Like the flash of a meteor, the glance of his mane
Shall marshal your march through the darkness and rain.

The drawbridge has dropp'd, the bugle has blown;
One pledge is to quaff yet—then mount and begone!—
To their honour and peace, that shall rest with the slain;
To their health and their glee, that see Teviot again!

1830.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE MONUMENT OF THE REV. GEORGE SCOTT[1]

To youth, to age, alike, this tablet pale
Tells the brief moral of its tragic tale.
Art thou a parent? Reverence this bier,
The parents' fondest hopes lie buried here.
Art thou a youth, prepared on life to start,
With opening talents and a generous heart,
Fair hopes and flattering prospects all thine own?
Lo! here their end—a monumental stone.
But let submission tame each sorrowing thought,
Heaven crown'd its champion ere the fight was fought.

1830.

[1] This young gentleman, a son of the author's friend and relation, Hugh Scott, of Harden, Esq. (afterwards Lord Polwarth), became Rector of Kentisbeare, in Devonshire, in 1828, and died there the 9th June, 1830. This epitaph appears on his tomb in the chancel there.

LINES ON FORTUNE[1]

Fortune, my Foe, why dost thou frown on me?
And will my Fortune never better be?
With thou, I say, for ever breed my pain?
And wilt thou ne'er return my joys again?

No—let my ditty be henceforth—

Fortune, my Friend, how well thou favourest me!
A kinder Fortune man did never see!
Thou propp'st my thigh, thou ridd'st my knee of pain,
I'll walk, I'll mount—I'll be a man again.

1831.

[1] "By the advice of Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson, Sir Walter consulted a skilful mechanist, by name *Fortune*, about a contrivance for the support of the lame limb, which had of late given him much pain, as well as inconvenience. Mr. Fortune produced a clever piece of handiwork, and Sir Walter felt at first great relief from the use of it: insomuch that his spirits rose to quite the old pitch, and his letter to me upon the occasion overflows with merry applications of sundry maxims and verses about *Fortune*. '*Fortes Fortuna adjuvat*'—he says—'never more sing I.'".

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER

IMITATIONS OF THE ANCIENT BALLAD

THOMAS THE RHYMER

(In Three Parts)

PART FIRST—ANCIENT

Few personages are so renowned in tradition as Thomas of Ercildoune, known by the appellation of *The Rhymer*. Uniting, or supposing to unite, in his person, the powers of poetical composition, and of vaticination, his memory, even after the lapse of five hundred years, is regarded with veneration by his countrymen.

The following ballad is given from a copy, obtained from a lady residing not far from Ercildoune, corrected and enlarged by one in Mrs. Brown's MSS. The former copy, however, as might be expected, is far more minute as to local description. To this old tale the editor has ventured to add a second part, consisting of a kind of cento, from the printed prophecies vulgarly ascribed to the Rhymer; and a third part, entirely modern, founded upon the tradition of his having returned with the hart and hind, to the Land of Faëry. [See the Notes on the ballad in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.]

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;[1]
A ferlie he spied wi' his ee;
And there he saw a ladye bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tett of her horse's mane,
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas, he pull'd aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee,
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven!
For thy peer on earth I never did see."—

[1] Huntly Bank, and the adjoining ravine, called, from immemorial tradition, *the Rymer's Glen*, were ultimately included in the domain of Abbotsford. The scenery of this glen forms the background of Edwin Landseer's portrait of Sir Walter Scott, painted in 1833.—L.

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said,
"That name does not belang to me;
I am but the Queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said;
"Harp and carp along wi' me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be."—

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunton me."—
Syne he has kiss'd her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now, ye maun go wi' me," she said;
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Thro' weal or woe as may chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed;
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind:
And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on;
The steed gaed swifter than the wind;
Until they reach'd a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down, now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee;
Abide and rest a little space,
And I will shew you ferlies three.

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few enquires.

"And see ye not that braid braid road,
That lies across that lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

"And see not ye that bonny road,
That winds about the fernie brae?
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

"But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For, if ye speak word in Elflyn land,
Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie."

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
And they waded through red blude to the knee;
For a' the blude that's shed on earth
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came on to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree—
"Take this for thy wages, true Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that can never lie."—

"My tongue is mine ain," true Thomas said;
"A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may be.

"I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye."—
"Now hold thy peace!" the lady said,
"For as I say, so must it be."—

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green;
And till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

PART SECOND

Altered from Ancient Prophecies [1]

When seven years were come and gane,
The sun blink'd fair on pool and stream;
And Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,
Like one awaken'd from a dream.

[1] An exact reprint of these prophecies, from the edition of Waldegrave, in 1603, collated with Hart's, of 1615, from the copy in the Abbotsford Library, was completed for the Bannatyne Club, under the care of the learned antiquary, Mr. David Laing of Edinburgh.—Ed. 1833.

He heard the trampling of a steed,
  He saw the flash of armour flee,
And he beheld a gallant knight
  Come riding down by the Eildon-tree.

He was a stalwart knight, and strong;
  Of giant make he 'pear'd to be:
He stirr'd his horse, as he were wode,
  Wi' gilded spurs, of faushion free.

Says—"Well met, well met, true Thomas!
  Some uncouth ferlies show to me."—
Says—"Christ thee save, Corspatrick brave!
  Thrice welcume, good Dunbar, to me!

"Light down, light down, Corspatrick brave!
  And I will show thee curses three,
Shall gar fair Scotland greet and grane,
  And change the green to the black livery.

"A storm shall roar this very hour,
  From Ross's hills to Solway sea."—
"Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar!
  For the sun shines sweet on fauld and lee."—

He put his hand on the Earlie's head;
  He show'd him a rock beside the sea,
Where a king lay stiff beneath his steed,[1]
  And steel-dight nobles wiped their ee.

"The neist curse lights on Branxton hills:
  By Flodden's high and heathery side,
Shall wave a banner red as blude,
  And chieftains throng wi' meikle pride.

"A Scottish King shall come full keen,
  The ruddy lion beareth he;
A feather'd arrow sharp, I ween,
  Shall make him wink and warre to see.

"When he is bloody, and all to bledde,
  Thus to his men he still shall say—
'For God's sake, turn ye back again,
  And give yon southern folk a fray!
Why should I lose, the right is mine?
  My doom is not to die this day.'[2]

[1] King Alexander, killed by a fall from his horse, near Kinghorn.
[2] The uncertainty which long prevailed in Scotland, concerning the fate of James IV., is well known.

"Yet turn ye to the eastern hand,
And woe and wonder ye sall see;
How forty thousand spearmen stand,
Where yon rank river meets the sea.

"There shall the lion lose the gylte,
And the libbards bear it clean away;
At Pinkyn Cleuch there shall be spilt
Much gentil bluid that day."—

"Enough, enough, of curse and ban;
Some blessings show thou now to me,
Or, by the faith o' my bodie," Corspatrick said,
"Ye shall rue the day ye e'er saw me!"—

"The first of blessings I shall thee show,
Is by a burn, that's call'd of bread;[1]
Where Saxon men shall tine the bow,
And find their arrows lack the head.

"Beside that brigg, out ower that burn,
Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a fallen courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.

"Beside a headless cross of stone,
The libbards there shall lose the gree:
The raven shall come, the erne shall go,
And drink the Saxon bluid sae free.
The cross of stone they shall not know,
So thick the corses there shall be."—

"But tell me now," said brave Dunbar,
"True Thomas, tell now unto me,
What man shall rule the isle Britain,
Even from the north to the southern sea?"—

"A French Queen shall bear the son,
Shall rule all Britain to the sea;
He of the Bruce's blood shall come,
As near as in the ninth degree.

"The waters worship shall his race;
Likewise the waves of the farthest sea;
For they shall ride over ocean wide,
With hempen bridles, and horse of tree."

[1] One of Thomas's rhymes, preserved by tradition runs thus:—

"The burn of breid
Shall run fow reid."

Bannock-burn is the brook here meant. The Scots give the name of *bannock* to a thick round cake of unleavened bread.

PART THIRD—MODERN

Thomas the Rhymer was renowned among his contemporaries as the author of the celebrated romance of *Sir Tristrem*. Of this once-admired poem only one copy is now known to exist, which is in the Advocates' Library. The editor, in 1804, published a small edition of this curious work; which, if it does not revive the reputation of the bard of Ercildoune, is at least the earliest specimen of Scottish poetry hitherto published.

The following attempt to commemorate the Rhymer's poetical fame, and the traditional account of his marvellous return to Fairy Land, being entirely modern, would have been placed with greater propriety among the class of Modern Ballads, had it not been for its immediate connection with the first and second parts of the same story.

When seven years more were come and gone,
Was war through Scotland spread,
And Ruberslaw show'd high Dunyon
His beacon blazing red.

Then all by bonny Coldingknow,[1]
Pitch'd pallions took their room,
And crested helms, and spears a-rowe,
Glanced gaily through the broom.

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
Resounds the ensenzie;[2]
They roused the deer from Caddenhead,
To distant Torwoodlee.[3]

The feast was spread in Ercildoune,
In Learmont's high and ancient hall:
And there were knights of great renown,
And ladies, laced in pall.

Nor lacked they, while they sat at dine,
The music nor the tale,
Nor goblets of the blood-red wine
Nor mantling quaighs of ale.

True Thomas rose, with harp in hand,
When as the feast was done:
(In minstrel strife, in Fairy Land,
The elfin harp he won.)

[1] An ancient tower near Ercildoune, belonging to a family of the name of Home. One of Thomas's prophecies is said to have run thus:—

"Vengeance! vengeance! when and where?
On the house of Coldingknow, now and ever mair!"

The spot is rendered classical by its having given name to the beautiful melody called the *Broom o' the Cowdenknows*.

[2] *Ensenzie*—War-cry, or gathering word.

[3] Torwoodlee and Caddenhead are places in Selkirkshire; both the property of Mr. Pringle of Torwoodlee.

Hush'd were the throng, both limb and tongue,
And harpers for envy pale;
And armed lords lean'd on their swords,
And hearken'd to the tale.

In numbers high, the witching tale
The prophet pour'd along;
No after bard might e'er avail
Those numbers to prolong.

Yet fragments of the lofty strain
Float down the tide of years,
As, buoyant on the stormy main,
A parted wreck appears.

He sung King Arthur's Table Round:
The Warrior of the Lake;
How courteous Gawaine met the wound,
And bled for ladies' sake.

But chief, in gentle Tristrem's praise,
The notes melodious swell;
Was none excell'd in Arthur's days,
The knight of Lionelle.

For Marke, his cowardly uncle's right,
A venom'd wound he bore;
When fierce Morholde he slew in fight,
Upon the Irish shore.

No art the poison might withstand;
No medicine could be found,
Till lovely Isolde's lily hand
Had probed the rankling wound.

With gentle hand and soothing tongue
She bore the leech's part;
And, while she o'er his sick-bed hung,
He paid her with his heart.

O fatal was the gift, I ween!
For, doom'd in evil tide,
The maid must be rude Cornwall's queen,
His cowardly uncle's bride.

Their loves, their woes, the gifted bard
In fairy tissue wove;
Where lords, and knights, and ladies bright,
In gay confusion strove.

The Garde Joyeuse, amid the tale,
High rear'd its glittering head;
And Avalon's enchanted vale
In all its wonders spread.

Brangwain was there, and Segramore,
And fiend-born Merlin's gramarye;
Of that famed wizard's mighty lore,
O who could sing but he?

Through many a maze the winning song
In changeful passion led,
Till bent at length the listening throng
O'er Tristrem's dying bed.

His ancient wounds their scars expand,
With agony his heart is wrung:
O where is Isolde's lilye hand,
And where her soothing tongue?

She comes! she comes!—like flash of flame
Can lovers' footsteps fly:
She comes! she comes!—she only came
To see her Tristrem die.

She saw him die; her latest sigh
Join'd in a kiss his parting breath,
The gentlest pair, that Britain bare,
United are in death.

There paused the harp: its lingering sound
Died slowly on the ear;
The silent guests still bent around,
For still they seem'd to hear.

Then woe broke forth in murmurs weak:
Nor ladies heaved alone the sigh;
But, half ashamed, the rugged cheek
Did many a gauntlet dry.

On Leader's stream, and Learmont's tower,
The mists of evening close;
In camp, in castle, or in bower,
Each warrior sought repose.

Lord Douglas, in his lofty tent,
Dream'd o'er the woeful tale;
When footsteps light, across the bent,
The warrior's ears assail.

He starts, he wakes;—"What, Richard, ho!
Arise, my page, arise!
What venturous wight, at dead of night,
Dare step where Douglas lies!"—

Then forth they rush'd: by Leader's tide,
A selcouth sight they see—
A hart and hind pace side by side,
As white as snow on Fairnalie.

Beneath the moon, with gesture proud,
They stately move and slow;
Nor scare they at the gathering crowd,
Who marvel as they go.

To Learmont's tower a message sped,
As fast as page might run;
And Thomas started from his bed,
And soon his clothes did on.

First he woxe pale, and then woxe red;
Never a word he spake but three;—
"My sand is run; my thread is spun;
This sign regardeth me."

The elfin harp his neck around,
In minstrel guise, he hung;
And on the wind, in doleful sound,
Its dying accents rung.

Then forth he went; yet turn'd him oft
To view his ancient hall:
On the grey tower, in lustre soft,
The autumn moonbeams fall;

And Leader's waves, like silver sheen,
Danced shimmering in the ray;
In deepening mass, at distance seen,
Broad Soltra's mountains lay.

"Farewell, my fathers' ancient tower!
A long farewell," said he:
"The scene of pleasure, pomp, or power,
Thou never more shalt be.

"To Learmont's name no foot of earth
Shall here again belong,
And, on thy hospitable hearth,
The hare shall leave her young.

"Adieu! adieu!" again he cried,
All as he turn'd him roun'—
"Farewell to Leader's silver tide!
Farewell to Ercildoune!"

The hart and hind approach'd the place,
As lingering yet he stood;
And there, before Lord Douglas's face,
With them he cross'd the flood.

Lord Douglas leap'd on his berry-brown steed,
And spurr'd him the Leader o'er;
But, though he rode with lightning speed,
He never saw them more.

Some said to hill, and some to glen,
Their wondrous course had been;
But ne'er in haunts of living men
Again was Thomas seen.

GLENFINLAS; OR, LORD RONALD'S CORONACH[1]

The simple tradition, upon which the following stanzas are founded, runs thus: While two Highland hunters were passing the night in a solitary *bothy* (a hut, built for the purpose of hunting), and making merry over their venison and whisky, one of them expressed a wish that they had pretty lasses to complete their party. The words were scarcely uttered, when two beautiful young women, habited in green, entered the hut, dancing and singing. One of the hunters was seduced by the siren who attached herself particularly to him, to leave the hut: the other remained, and, suspicious of the fair seducers, continued to play upon a trump, or Jew's harp, some strain, consecrated to the Virgin Mary. Day at length came, and the temptress vanished. Searching in the forest, he found the bones of his unfortunate friend, who had been torn to pieces and devoured by the fiend into whose toils he had fallen. The place was from thence called the Glen of the Green Women.

Glenfinlas is a tract of forest-ground, lying in the Highlands of Perthshire, not far from Callender in Menteith. It was formerly a royal forest, and now belongs to the Earl of Moray. This country, as well as the adjacent district of Balquidder, was, in times of yore, chiefly inhabited by the Macgregors. To the west of the Forest of Glenfinlas lies Loch Katrine, and its romantic avenue, called the Trossachs. Benledi, Benmore, and Benvoirlich, are mountains in the same district, and at no great distance from Glenfinlas. The river Teith passes Callender and the Castle of Doune, and joins the Forth near Stirling. The pass of Lenny is immediately above Callender, and is the principal access to the Highlands from that town. Glenartney is a forest, near Benvoirlich. The whole forms a sublime tract of Alpine scenery.

This ballad first appeared in the *Tales of Wonder*.

[1] *Coronach* is the lamentation for a deceased warrior, sung by the aged of the clan.

" For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair;
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless oft, like moody madness stare,
To see the phantom-train their secret work prepare."
COLLINS.

" O hone a rie'! O hone a rie'!
The pride of Albin's line is o'er,
And fall'n Glenartney's stateliest tree;
We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more! "—

O, sprung from great Macgillianore,
The chief that never fear'd a foe,
How matchless was thy broad claymore,
How deadly thine unerring bow!

Well can the Saxon widows tell,
How, on the Teith's resounding shore,
The boldest Lowland warriors fell,
As down from Lenny's pass you bore.

But o'er his hills, in festal day,
How blazed Lord Ronald's beltane-tree,
While youths and maids the light strathspey
So nimbly danced with Highland glee!

Cheer'd by the strength of Ronald's shell,
E'en age forgot his tresses hoar;
But now the loud lament we swell,
O ne'er to see Lord Ronald more!

From distant isles a chieftain came,
The joys of Ronald's halls to find,
And chase with him the dark-brown game,
That bounds o'er Albin's hills of wind.

'Twas Moy; whom in Columba's isle
The seer's prophetic spirit found,
As, with a minstrel's fire the while,
He waked his harp's harmonious sound.

Full many a spell to him was known,
Which wandering spirits shrink to hear;
And many a lay of potent tone,
Was never meant for mortal ear.

[1] The term Sassenach, or Saxon, is applied by the Highlanders to their Low-Country neighbours.

For there, 'tis said, in mystic mood,
High converse with the dead they hold,
And oft espy the fated shroud,
That shall the future corpse enfold.

O so it fell, that on a day,
To rouse the red deer from their den,
The Chiefs have ta'en their distant way,
And scour'd the deep Glenfinlas glen.

No vassals wait their sports to aid,
To watch their safety, deck their board;
Their simple dress, the Highland plaid,
Their trusty guard, the Highland sword.

Three summer days, through brake and dell,
Their whistling shafts successful flew;
And still, when dewy evening fell,
The quarry to their hut they drew.

In grey Glenfinlas' deepest nook
The solitary cabin stood,
Fast by Moneira's sullen brook,
Which murmurs through that lonely wood.

Soft fell the night, the sky was calm,
When three successive days had flown;
And summer mist in dewy balm
Steep'd heathy bank, and mossy stone.

The moon, half-hid in silvery flakes,
Afar her dubious radiance shed,
Quivering on Katrine's distant lakes,
And resting on Benledi's head.

Now in their hut, in social guise,
Their silvan fare the Chiefs enjoy;
And pleasure laughs in Ronald's eyes,
As many a pledge he quaffs to Moy.

"What lack we here to crown our bliss,
While thus the pulse of joy beats high?
What, but fair woman's yielding kiss,
Her panting breath and melting eye?

"To chase the deer of yonder shades,
This morning left their father's pile
The fairest of our mountain maids,
The daughters of the proud Glengyle.

"Long have I sought sweet Mary's heart,
And dropp'd the tear, and heaved the sigh:
But vain the lover's wily art,
Beneath a sister's watchful eye.

"But thou mayst teach that guardian fair,
While far with Mary I am flown,
Of other hearts to cease her care,
And find it hard to guard her own.

"Touch but thy harp, thou soon shalt see
The lovely Flora of Glengyle,
Unmindful of her charge and me,
Hang on thy notes, 'twixt tear and smile.

"Or, if she choose a melting tale,
All underneath the greenwood bough,
Will good St. Oran's rule prevail,
Stern huntsman of the rigid brow?"—

"Since Enrick's fight, since Morna's death,
No more on me shall rapture rise,
Responsive to the panting breath,
Or yielding kiss, or melting eyes.

"E'en then, when o'er the heath of woe,
Where sunk my hopes of love and fame,
I bade my harp's wild wailings flow,
On me the Seer's sad spirit came.

"The last dread curse of angry heaven,
With ghastly sights and sounds of woe,
To dash each glimpse of joy was given—
The gift, the future ill to know.

"The bark thou saw'st, yon summer morn,
So gaily part from Oban's bay,
My eye beheld her dash'd and torn,
Far on the rocky Colonsay.

"Thy Fergus too—thy sister's son,
Thou saw'st, with pride, the gallant's power,
As marching 'gainst the Lord of Downe,
He left the skirts of huge Benmore.

"Thou only saw'st their tartans wave,
As down Benvoirlich's side they wound,

Heard'st but the pibroch, answering brave
To many a target clanking round.

"I heard the groans, I mark'd the tears,
I saw the wound his bosom bore,
When on the serried Saxon spears
He pour'd his clan's resistless roar.

"And thou, who bidst me think of bliss,
And bidst my heart awake to glee,
And court, like thee, the wanton kiss—
That heart, O Ronald, bleeds for thee!

"I see the death-damps chill thy brow;
I hear thy Warning Spirit cry;
The corpse-lights dance—they're gone, and now—
No more is given to gifted eye!"—

"Alone enjoy thy dreary dreams,
Sad prophet of the evil hour!
Say, should we scorn joy's transient beams,
Because to-morrow's storm may lour?

"Or false, or sooth, thy words of woe,
Clangillian's Chieftain ne'er shall fear;
His blood shall bound at rapture's glow,
Though doom'd to stain the Saxon spear.

"E'en now, to meet me in yon dell,
My Mary's buskins brush the dew."
He spoke, nor bade the Chief farewell,
But called his dogs, and gay withdrew.

Within an hour return'd each hound;
In rush'd the rousers of the deer;
They howl'd in melancholy sound,
Then closely couch'd beside the Seer.

No Ronald yet; though midnight came,
And sad were Moy's prophetic dreams,
As, bending o'er the dying flame,
He fed the watch-fire's quivering gleams.

Sudden the hounds erect their ears,
And sudden cease their moaning howl;
Close press'd to Moy, they mark their fears
By shivering limbs and stifled growl.

Untouch'd, the harp began to ring,
As softly, slowly, oped the door;
And shook responsive every string,
As light a footstep press'd the floor.

And by the watch-fire's glimmering light,
Close by the minstrel's side was seen
An huntress maid, in beauty bright,
All dropping wet her robes of green.

All dropping wet her garments seem;
Chill'd was her cheek, her bosom bare,
As, bending o'er the dying gleam,
She wrung the moisture from her hair.

With maiden blush, she softly said,
"O gentle huntsman, hast thou seen,
In deep Glenfinlas' moonlight glade,
A lovely maid in vest of green:

"With her a Chief in Highland pride;
His shoulders bear the hunter's bow,
The mountain dirk adorns his side,
Far on the wind his tartans flow?"—

"And who art thou? and who are they?"
All ghastly gazing, Moy replied:
"And why, beneath the moon's pale ray,
Dare ye thus roam Glenfinlas' side?"—

"Where wild Loch Katrine pours her tide,
Blue, dark, and deep, round many an isle,
Our father's towers o'erhang her side,
The castle of the bold Glengyle.

"To chase the dun Glenfinlas deer,
Our woodland course this morn we bore,
And haply met, while wandering here,
The son of great Macgillianore.

"O aid me, then, to seek the pair,
Whom, loitering in the woods, I lost;
Alone, I dare not venture there,
Where walks, they say, the shrieking ghost."—

"Yes, many a shrieking ghost walks there;
Then, first, my own sad vow to keep,
Here will I pour my midnight prayer,
Which still must rise when mortals sleep."—

"O first, for pity's gentle sake,
Guide a lone wanderer on her way!
For I must cross the haunted brake,
And reach my father's towers ere day."—

"First, three times tell each Ave-bead,
And thrice a Pater-noster say;
Then kiss with me the holy rede;
So shall we safely wend our way."—

"O shame to knighthood, strange and foul!
Go, doff the bonnet from thy brow,
And shroud thee in the monkish cowl,
Which best befits thy sullen vow.

"Not so, by high Dunlathmon's fire,
Thy heart was froze to love and joy,
When gaily rung thy raptured lyre
To wanton Morna's melting eye."

Wild stared the minstrel's eyes of flame,
And high his sable locks arose,
And quick his colour went and came,
As fear and rage alternate rose.

"And thou! when by the blazing oak
I lay, to her and love resign'd,
Say, rode ye on the eddying smoke,
Or sail'd ye on the midnight wind?

"Not thine a race of mortal blood,
Nor old Glengyle's pretended line;
Thy dame, the Lady of the Flood—
Thy sire, the Monarch of the Mine,"

He mutter'd thrice St. Oran's rhyme,
And thrice St. Fillan's powerful prayer;
Then turn'd him to the eastern clime,
And sternly shook his coal-black hair.

And, bending o'er his harp, he flung
His wildest witch-notes on the wind;
And loud, and high, and strange, they rung,
As many a magic change they find.

Tall wax'd the Spirit's altering form,
Till to the roof her stature grew;
Then, mingling with the rising storm,
With one wild yell away she flew.

Rain beats, hail rattles, whirlwinds tear:
The slender hut in fragments flew;
But not a lock of Moy's loose hair
Was waved by wind, or wet by dew.

Wild mingling with the howling gale,
Loud bursts of ghastly laughter rise;
High o'er the minstrel's head they sail,
And die amid the northern skies.

The voice of thunder shook the wood,
As ceased the more than mortal yell;
And, spattering foul, a shower of blood
Upon the hissing firebrands fell.

Next dropp'd from high a mangled arm;
The fingers strain'd an half-drawn blade:
And last, the life-blood streaming warm,
Torn from the trunk, a gasping head.

Oft o'er that head, in battling field,
Stream'd the proud crest of high Benmore;
That arm the broad claymore could wield,
Which dyed the Teith with Saxon gore.

Woe to Moneira's sullen rills!
Woe to Glenfinlas' dreary glen!
There never son of Albin's hills
Shall draw the hunter's shaft agen.

E'en the tired pilgrim's burning feet
At noon shall shun that sheltering den,
Lest, journeying in their rage, he meet
The wayward Ladies of the Glen.

And we—behind the Chieftain's shield,
No more shall we in safety dwell;
None leads the people to the field—
And we the loud lament must swell.

O hone a rie'! O hone a rie'!
The pride of Albin's line is o'er!
And fall'n Glenartney's stateliest tree;
We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald more!

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN

Smaylho'me, or Smallholm Tower, the scene of the following ballad, is situated on the northern boundary of Roxburghshire, among a cluster of wild rocks, called Sandiknow-Crags, the property of Hugh Scott, Esq. of Harden [now Lord Polwarth]. The tower is a high square building, surrounded by an outer wall, now ruinous. The circuit of the outer court, being defended on three sides, by a precipice and morass, is accessible only from the west, by a steep and rocky path. The apartments, as is usual in a Border keep, or fortress, are placed one above another, and communicate by a narrow stair; on the roof are two bartizans, or platforms, for defence or pleasure. The inner door of the tower is wood, the outer an iron gate; the distance between them being nine feet, the thickness, namely, of the wall. From the elevated situation of Smaylholme Tower, it is seen many miles in every direction. Among the crags by which it is surrounded, one, more eminent, is called the *Watchfold*, and is said to have been the station of a beacon, in the times of war with England. Without the tower-court is a ruined chapel. Brotherstone is a heath, in the neighbourhood of Smaylho'me Tower.

This ballad was first printed in Mr. Lewis's *Tales of Wonder*. [It was re-published, with additional illustrations, and an account of the battle of Ancram Moor, in the Border Minstrelsy.] The catastrophe of the tale is founded upon a well-known Irish tradition.[1] This ancient fortress and its vicinity formed the scene of the Editor's infancy, and seemed to claim from him this attempt to celebrate them in a Border tale.

The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
He spurr'd his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
His banner broad to rear;
He went not 'gainst the English yew,
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced, and his helmet was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

[1] The following passage, in Dr. Henry More's *Appendix to the Antidote against Atheism*, relates to a similar phenomenon:—"I confess, that the bodies of devils may not be only warm, but sindgingly hot, as it was in him that took one of Melancthon's relations by the hand, and so scorched her, that she bare the mark of it to her dying day. But the examples of cold are more frequent; as in that famous story of Cuntius, when he touched the arm of a certain woman of Pentoch, as she lay in her bed, he felt as cold as ice; and so did the spirit's claw to Anne Styles."—*Ed.* 1662, p. 135.

The Baron return'd in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour;
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reach'd his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor
Ran red with English blood;
Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hack'd and hew'd,
His acton pierced and tore,
His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,—
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still;
And he whistled thrice for his little foot-page,
His name was English Will.

"Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come hither to my knee;
Though thou art young, and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did thy lady do?"—

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild Watchfold;
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told.

"The bittern clamour'd from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
To the eiry Beacon Hill.

"I watch'd her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;—
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burned all alone.

"The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an Armed Knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

" And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

" The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watch'd the secret pair,
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

" And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say, ' Come this night to thy lady's bower;
Ask no bold Baron's leave.

" ' He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she'll undo, to her knight so true,
On the eve of good St. John.'—

" ' I cannot come; I must not come;
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of St. John I must wander alone:
In thy bower I may not be.'—

" ' Now, out on thee, fainthearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
Is worth the whole summer's day.

" ' And I'll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strewed on the stair;
So, by the black rood-stone, and by holy St. John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there! '—

" ' Though the blood-hound be mute, and the rush beneath my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would know.'—

" ' O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east!
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en;
And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.'—

" He turn'd him around, and grimly he frown'd;
Then he laughed right scornfully—

'He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that knight,
May as well say mass for me:

"'At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power,
In thy chamber will I be.'—
With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see."

Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron's brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high
"Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!"—

"His arms shone full bright, in the beacon's red light:
His plume it was scarlet and blue;
On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew."—

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold, and now laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon-tree."—

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!
For I heard her name his name;
And that lady bright, she called the knight
Sir Richard of Coldinghame."—

The bold Baron's brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale—
"The grave is deep and dark—and the corpse is stiff and stark—
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drown'd the name;
For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks do sing,
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame!"

He pass'd the court-gate, and he oped the tower-gate,
And he mounted the narrow stair,
To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on her wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;
Look'd over hill and vale;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"—
"Now hail, thou Baron true!
What news, what news, from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"—

"The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
For many a southron fell;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."—

The lady blush'd red, but nothing she said:
Nor added the Baron a word:
Then she stepp'd down the stair to her chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourn'd, and the Baron toss'd and turn'd,
And oft to himself he said,—
"The worms around him creep, and his bloody grave is deep . . .
It cannot give up the dead!"—

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
The night was wellnigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,
On the eve of good St. John.

The lady look'd through the chamber fair,
By the light of a dying flame;
And she was aware of a knight stood there—
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

"Alas! away, away!" she cried,
"For the holy Virgin's sake!"—
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side;
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon-tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain;
The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the Baron's brand, near Tweed's fair strand,
Most foully slain, I fell;
And my restless sprite on the beacon's height,
For a space is doom'd to dwell.

" At our trysting-place, for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro;
But I had not had power to come to thy bower
Had'st thou not conjured me so."—

Love master'd fear—her brow she cross'd;
" How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved, or art thou lost?"—
The vision shook his head!

" Who spilleth life, shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe:
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam;
His right upon her hand;
The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
For it scorch'd like a fiery brand.

The sable score, of fingers four,
Remains on that board impress'd;
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne'er looks upon the sun;
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne'er beholds the day,
That monk, who speaks to none—
That nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,
That monk the bold Baron.

CADYOW CASTLE

ADDRESSED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LADY ANNE HAMILTON

The ruins of Cadyow, or Cadzow Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family of Hamilton, are situated upon the precipitous banks of the river Evan, about two miles above its junction with the Clyde. It was dismantled, in the conclusion of the Civil Wars, during the reign of the unfortunate Mary, to whose cause the house of Hamilton devoted themselves with a generous zeal, which occasioned their temporary obscurity, and, very nearly, their total ruin. The situation of the ruins, embosomed in wood, darkened by ivy and creeping shrubs, and overhanging the brawling torrent, is romantic in the highest degree. In the immediate vicinity of Cadyow is a grove of immense oaks, the remains of the Caledonian Forest, which anciently extended through the south of Scotland, from the eastern to the Atlantic Ocean. Some of these trees measure twenty-five feet, and upwards, in circumference; and the state of decay, in which they now appear, shows that they have witnessed the rites of the Druids. The whole scenery is included in the magnificent and extensive park of the Duke of Hamilton. There was long preserved in this forest the breed of the Scottish wild cattle, until their ferocity occasioned their being extirpated, about forty years ago. Their appearance was beautiful, being milk-white, with black muzzles, horns, and hoofs. The bulls are described by ancient authors as having white manes; but those of latter days had lost that peculiarity, perhaps by intermixture with the tame breed.

When princely Hamilton's abode
  Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,
The song went round, the goblet flow'd,
  And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,
  So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,
And echoed light the dancer's bound,
  As mirth and music cheer'd the hall.

But Cadyow's towers, in ruins laid,
  And vaults, by ivy mantled o'er,
Thrill to the music of the shade,
  Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,
  You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
And tune my harp, of Border frame,
  On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,
From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst turn,
To draw oblivion's pall aside,
And mark the long-forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid! at thy command,
Again the crumbled halls shall rise;
Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,
The past returns—the present flies.

Where, with the rock's wood cover'd side,
Were blended late the ruins green,
Rise turrets in fantastic pride,
And feudal banners flaunt between:

Where the rude torrent's brawling course
Was shagg'd with thorn and tangling sloe,
The ashler buttress braves its force,
And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night—the shade of keep and spire
Obscurely dance on Evan's stream;
And on the wave the warder's fire
Is chequering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is grey;
The weary warder leaves his tower;
Steeds snort; uncoupled stag-hounds bay,
And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls—they hurry out—
Clatters each plank and swinging chain,
As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
Urge the shy steed, and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the Chief rode on;[1]
His shouting merry-men throng behind;
The steed of princely Hamilton
Was fleeter than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks bound,
The startled red-deer scuds the plain,
For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound
Has roused their mountain haunts again.

[1] The head of the family of Hamilton, at this period, was James, Earl of Arran, Duke of Chatelherault, in France, and first peer of the Scottish realm. In 1569, he was appointed by Queen Mary her lieutenant-general in Scotland, under the singular title of her adopted father.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,
Whose limbs a thousand years have worn,
What sullen roar comes down the gale,
And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase,
That roam in woody Caledon,
Crashing the forest in his race,
The Mountain Bull comes thundering on.

Fierce, on the hunter's quiver'd band,
He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,
Spurns, with black hoof and horn, the sand,
And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aim'd well, the Chieftain's lance has flown;
Struggling in blood the savage lies;
His roar is sunk in hollow groan—
Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the *pryse!*

'Tis noon—against the knotted oak
The hunters rest the idle spear;
Curls through the trees the slender smoke,
Where yeomen dight the woodland cheer.

Proudly the Chieftain mark'd his clan,
On greenwood lap all careless thrown,
Yet miss'd his eye the boldest man
That bore the name of Hamilton.

"Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,
Still wont our weal and woe to share?
Why comes he not our sport to grace?
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?"—

Stern Claud replied, with darkening face,
(Grey Paisley's haughty lord was he,)
"At merry feast, or buxom chase,
No more the warrior wilt thou see.

"Few suns have set since Woodhouselee
Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets foam,
When to his hearths, in social glee,
The war-worn soldier turn'd him home.

"There, wan from her maternal throes,
His Margaret, beautiful and mild,
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
And peaceful nursed her new-born child.

"O change accursed! past are those days;
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild,
Where mountain Eske through woodland flows,
Her arms enfold a shadowy child—
Oh! is it she, the pallid rose?

"The wilder'd traveller sees her glide,
And hears her feeble voice with awe—
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's pride!
And woe for injured Bothwellhaugh!'"

He ceased—and cries of rage and grief
Burst mingling from the kindred band,
And half arose the kindling Chief,
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.

But who, o'er bush, o'er stream and rock,
Rides headlong, with resistless speed,
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke
Drives to the leap his jaded steed;

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs glare,
As one some vision'd sight that saw,
Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair?—
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh.

From gory selle,[1] and reeling steed,
Sprung the fierce horseman with a bound,
And, reeking from the recent deed,
He dash'd his carbine on the ground.

Sternly he spoke—"'Tis sweet to hear
In good greenwood the bugle blown,
But sweeter to Revenge's ear,
To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

"Your slaughter'd quarry proudly trode,
At dawning morn, o'er dale and down,
But prouder base-born Murray rode
Through old Linlithgow's crowded town.

"From the wild Border's humbled side,
In haughty triumph marched he,

[1] *Selle*—Saddle.

While Knox relax'd his bigot pride,
And smiled, the traitorous pomp to see.

"But can stern Power, with all his vaunt,
Or Pomp, with all her courtly glare,
The settled heart of Vengeance daunt,
Or change the purpose of Despair?

"With hackbut bent, my secret stand,
Dark as the purposed deed, I chose,
And mark'd, where, mingling in his band,
Troop'd Scottish pikes and English bows.

"Dark Morton,[1] girt with many a spear,
Murder's foul minion, led the van;
And clash'd their broadswords in the rear
The wild Macfarlanes' plaided clan.

"Glencairn and stout Parkhead were nigh,
Obsequious at their Regent's rein,
And haggard Lindesay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

"'Mid pennon'd spears, a steely grove,
Proud Murray's plumage floated high;
Scarce could his trampling charger move,
So close the minions crowded nigh.

"From the raised vizor's shade, his eye,
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks along,
And his steel truncheon, waved on high,
Seem'd marshalling the iron throng.

"But yet his sadden'd brow confess'd
A passing shade of doubt and awe;
Some fiend was whispering in his breast;
'Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"The death-shot parts—the charger springs—
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!
And Murray's plumy helmet rings—
—Rings on the ground, to rise no more.

"What joy the raptured youth can feel,
To hear her love the loved one tell—
Or he, who broaches on his steel
The wolf, by whom his infant fell!

[1] Of this noted person, it is enough to say, that he was active in the murder of David Rizzio, and at least privy to that of Darnley.

"But dearer to my injured eye
To see in dust proud Murray roll;
And mine was ten times trebled joy,
To hear him groan his felon soul.

"My Margaret's spectre glided near;
With pride her bleeding victim saw;
And shriek'd in his death-deafen'd ear,
'Remember injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"Then speed thee, noble Chatlerault!
Spread to the wind thy banner'd tree!'
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow! –
Murray is fall'n, and Scotland free!"

Vaults every warrior to his steed;
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim—
"Murray is fall'n, and Scotland freed!
Couch, Arran! couch thy spear of flame!"

But, see! the minstrel vision fails—
The glimmering spears are seen no more;
The shouts of war die on the gales,
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar.

For the loud bugle, pealing high,
The blackbird whistles down the vale,
And sunk in ivied ruins lie
The banner'd towers of Evandale.

For Chiefs, intent on bloody deed,
And Vengeance shouting o'er the slain,
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed,
Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure own
The maids who list the minstrel's tale;
Nor e'er a ruder guest be known
On the fair banks of Evandale!

[1] An oak, half-sawn, with the motto *I hrough*, is an ancient cognisance of the family of Hamilton.

THE GRAY BROTHER

A FRAGMENT

The imperfect state of this ballad, which was written several years ago, is not a circumstance affected for the purpose of giving it that peculiar interest which is often found to arise from ungratified curiosity. On the contrary, it was the Editor's intention to have completed the tale, if he had found himself able to succeed to his own satisfaction. Yielding to the opinion of persons, whose judgment, if not biassed by the partiality of friendship, is entitled to deference, he has preferred inserting these verses as a fragment, to his intention of entirely suppressing them.

The tradition, upon which the tale is founded, regards a house upon the barony of Gilmerton, near Lasswade, in Mid Lothian. This building, now called Gilmerton Grange, was originally named Burndale, from the following tragic adventure. The barony of Gilmerton belonged, of yore, to a gentleman named Heron, who had one beautiful daughter. This young lady was seduced by the Abbot of Newbattle, a richly endowed abbey, upon the banks of the South Esk, now a seat of the Marquis of Lothian. Heron came to the knowledge of this circumstance, and learned also, that the lovers carried on their guilty intercourse by the connivance of the lady's nurse, who lived at this house of Gilmerton Grange, or Burndale. He formed a resolution of bloody vengeance, undeterred by the supposed sanctity of the clerical character, or by the stronger claims of natural affection. Choosing, therefore, a dark and windy night, when the objects of his vengeance were engaged in a stolen interview, he set fire to a stack of dried thorns, and other combustibles, which he had caused to be piled against the house, and reduced to a pile of glowing ashes the dwelling, with all its inmates.

The Pope he was saying the high, high mass,
All on Saint Peter's day,
With the power to him given, by the saints in heaven,
To wash men's sins away.

The Pope he was saying the blessed mass,
And the people kneel'd around,
And from each man's soul his sins did pass,
As he kiss'd the holy ground.

And all, among the crowded throng,
Was still, both limb and tongue,
While, through vaulted roof and aisles aloof,
The holy accents rung.

At the holiest word he quiver'd for fear,
And falter'd in the sound—
And, when he would the chalice rear,
He dropp'd it to the ground.

"The breath of one of evil deed
Pollutes our sacred day;
He has no portion in our creed,
No part in what I say.

"A being, whom no blessed word
To ghostly peace can bring;
A wretch, at whose approach abhorr'd,
Recoils each holy thing.

"Up, up, unhappy! haste, arise!
My adjuration fear!
I charge thee not to stop my voice,
Nor longer tarry here!"—

Amid them all a pilgrim kneel'd,
In gown of sackcloth grey;
Far journeying from his native field,
He first saw Rome that day.

For forty days and nights so drear,
I ween he had not spoke,
And, save with bread and water clear,
His fast he ne'er had broke.

Amid the penitential flock,
Seem'd none more bent to pray;
But, when the Holy Father spoke,
He rose and went his way.

Again unto his native land
His weary course he drew,
To Lothian's fair and fertile strand,
And Pentland's mountains blue.

His unblest feet his native seat,
'Mid Eske's fair woods, regain;
Thro' woods more fair no stream more sweet
Rolls to the eastern main.

And lords to meet the pilgrim came,
And vassals bent the knee;
For all 'mid Scotland's chiefs of fame,
Was none more famed than he.

And boldly for his country, still,
In battle he had stood,
Ay, even when on the banks of Till
Her noblest pour'd their blood.

Sweet are the paths, O passing sweet!
By Eske's fair streams that run,
O'er airy steep, through copsewood deep,
Impervious to the sun.

There the rapt poet's step may rove,
And yield the muse the day;
There Beauty, led by timid Love,
May shun the tell-tale ray;

From that fair dome, where suit is paid
By blast of bugle free,
To Auchendinny's hazel glade,
And haunted Woodhouselee.

Who knows not Melville's beechy grove,
And Roslin's rocky glen,
Dalkeith, which all the virtues love,
And classic Hawthornden?

Yet never a path, from day to day,
The pilgrim's footsteps range,
Save but the solitary way
To Burndale's ruin'd grange.

A woful place was that, I ween,
As sorrow could desire;
For nodding to the fall was each crumbling wall,
And the roof was scathed with fire.

It fell upon a summer's eve,
While, on Carnethy's head,
The last faint gleams of the sun's low beams
Had streak'd the grey with red;

And the convent bell did vespers tell,
Newbattle's oaks among,
And mingled with the solemn knell
Our Ladye's evening song:

The heavy knell, the choir's faint swell,
Came slowly down the wind,
And on the pilgrim's ear they fell,
As his wonted path he did find.

Deep sunk in thought, I ween, he was,
Nor ever raised his eye,
Until he came to that dreary place,
Which did all in ruins lie.

He gazed on the walls, so scathed with fire,
With many a bitter groan—
And there was aware of a Gray Friar,
Resting him on a stone.

"Now, Christ thee save!" said the Gray Brother;
"Some pilgrim thou seemest to be."
But in sore amaze did Lord Albert gaze,
Nor answer again made he.

"O come ye from east, or come ye from west,
Or bring reliques from over the sea;
Or come ye from the shrine of St. James the divine,
Or St. John of Beverley?"—

"I come not from the shrine of St. James the divine,
Nor bring reliques from over the sea;
I bring but a curse from our father, the Pope,
Which for ever will cling to me."—

"Now, woful pilgrim, say not so!
But kneel thee down to me,
And shrive thee so clean of thy deadly sin,
That absolved thou mayst be."—

"And who art thou, thou Gray Brother,
That I should shrive to thee,
When He, to whom are given the keys of earth and heaven,
Has no power to pardon me?"—

"O I am sent from a distant clime,
Five thousand miles away,
And all to absolve a foul, foul crime,
Done *here* 'twixt night and day."

The pilgrim kneel'd him on the sand,
And thus began his saye—
When on his neck an ice-cold hand
Did that Gray Brother laye.

. . . . .

WAR-SONG OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS

"*Nennius.* Is not peace the end of arms?
"*Caratach.* Not where the cause implies a general conquest.
Had we a difference with some petty isle,
Or with our neighbours, Britons, for our landmarks,
The taking in of some rebellious lord,
Or making head against a slight commotion,
After a day of blood, peace might be argued:
But where we grapple for the land we live on,
The liberty we hold more dear than life,
The gods we worship, and, next these, our honours,
And, with those, swords that know no end of battle—
Those men, beside themselves, allow no neighbour,
Those minds, that, where the day is, claim inheritance,
And, where the sun makes ripe the fruit, their harvest,
And, where they march, but measure out more ground
To add to Rome ——
It must not be—No! as they are our foes,
Let's use the peace of honour—that's fair dealing;
But in our hands our swords. The hardy Roman,
That thinks to graft himself into my stock,
Must first begin his kindred under ground,
And be allied in ashes."——

Bonduca.

The following War-Song was written during the apprehension of an invasion. The corps of volunteers to which it was addressed was raised in 1797, consisting of gentlemen, mounted and armed at their own expense.

To horse! to horse! the standard flies,
The bugles sound the call;
The Gallic navy stems the seas,
The voice of battle's on the breeze,
Arouse ye, one and all!

From high Dunedin's towers we come,
A band of brothers true;
Our casques the leopard's spoils surround,
With Scotland's hardy thistle crown'd;
We boast the red and blue.

Though tamely crouch to Gallia's frown
Dull Holland's tardy train;
Their ravish'd toys though Romans mourn;
Though gallant Switzers vainly spurn,
And, foaming, gnaw the chain;

Oh! had they mark'd the avenging call
Their brethren's murder gave,
Disunion ne'er their ranks had mown,
Nor patriot valour, desperate grown,
Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn head,
In Freedom's temple born,
Dress our pale cheek in timid smile,
To hail a master in our isle,
Or brook a victor's scorn?

No! though destruction o'er the land
Come pouring as a flood,
The sun, that sees our falling day,
Shall mark our sabres' deadly sway,
And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
Or plunder's bloody gain;
Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard our king, to fence our law,
Nor shall their edge be vain.

If ever breath of British gale
Shall fan the tri-color,
Or footstep of invader rude,
With rapine foul, and red with blood,
Pollute our happy shore,—

Then farewell home! and farewell friends!
Adieu each tender tie!
Resolved, we mingle in the tide,
Where charging squadrons furious ride,
To conquer or to die.

To horse! to horse! the sabres gleam,
High sounds our bugle-call;
Combined by honour's sacred tie,
Our word is *Laws and Liberty!*
March forward one and all!

BALLADS TRANSLATED OR IMITATED FROM THE GERMAN, ETC.

WILLIAM AND HELEN

IMITATED FROM THE "LENORE" OF BÜRGER

I. From heavy dreams fair Helen rose,
And eyed the dawning red:
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long!
O art thou false or dead?"—

II. With gallant Fred'rick's princely power
He sought the bold Crusade;
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped.

III. With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And every knight return'd to dry
The tears his love had shed.

IV. Our gallant host was homeward bound
With many a song of joy;
Green waved the laurel in each plume,
The badge of victory.

V. And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts, and mirth, and melody,
The debt of love to pay.

VI. Full many a maid her true-love met,
And sobb'd in his embrace,
And flutt'ring joy in tears and smiles
Array'd full many a face.

VII. Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad;
She sought the host in vain;
For none could tell her William's fate,
If faithless, or if slain.

VIII. The martial band is past and gone;
She rends her raven hair,
And in distraction's bitter mood
She weeps with wild despair.

IX. "O rise, my child," her mother said,
"Nor sorrow thus in vain;
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recall again."—

X. "O mother, what is gone, is gone,
What's lost for ever lorn:
Death, death alone can comfort me;
O had I ne'er been born!

XI. "O break, my heart,—O break at once!
Drink my life-blood, Despair!
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share."—

XII. "O enter not in judgment, Lord!"
The pious mother prays;
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child!
She knows not what she says.

XIII. "O say thy pater noster, child!
O turn to God and grace!
His will, that turn'd thy bliss to bale,
Can change thy bale to bliss."—

XIV. "O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
My William's love was heaven on earth,
Without it earth is hell.

XV. "Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,
Since my loved William's slain?
I only pray'd for William's sake,
And all my prayers were vain."—

XVI. "O take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow;
By resignation's humble prayer,
O hallow'd be thy woe!"—

XVII. "No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain;
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again.

XVIII. "O break, my heart,—O break at once!
Be thou my god, Despair!
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer."—

XIX. "O enter not in judgment, Lord,
With thy frail child of clay!
She knows not what her tongue has spoke;
Impute it not, I pray!

XX. "Forbear, my child, this desperate woe,
And turn to God and grace;
Well can devotion's heavenly glow
Convert thy bale to bliss."—

XXI. "O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
Without my William what were heaven,
Or with him what were hell?"—

XXII. Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,
Upbraids each sacred power,
Till, spent, she sought her silent room,
All in the lonely tower.

XXIII. She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,
Till sun and day were o'er,
And through the glimmering lattice shone
The twinkling of the star.

XXIV. Then, crash! the heavy drawbridge fell
That o'er the moat was hung;
And, clatter, clatter! on its boards
The hoof of courser rung.

XXV. The clank of echoing steel was heard
As off the rider bounded;
And slowly on the winding stair
A heavy footstep sounded.

XXVI. And hark! and hark! a knock—Tap! tap!
A rustling stifled noise;—
Door-latch and tinkling staples ring;—
At length a whispering voice.

XXVII. Awake, awake, arise, my love!
How, Helen, dost thou fare?
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st? laugh'st thou, or weep'st?
Hast thought on me, my fair?"—

XXVIII. "My love! my love! —so late by night!—
I waked, I wept for thee:
Much have I borne since dawn of morn;
Where, William, couldst thou be?"—

XXIX. "We saddle late—from Hungary
I rode since darkness fell;
And to its bourne we both return
Before the matin-bell."—

XXX. "O rest this night within my arms,
And warm thee in their fold!
Chill howls through hawthorn bush the wind:—
My love is deadly cold."—

XXXI. "Let the wind howl through hawthorn bush!
This night we must away;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright;
I cannot stay till day.

XXXII. "Busk, busk, and boune! Thou mount'st behind
Upon my black barb steed:
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,
We haste to bridal bed."—

XXXIII. "To-night—to-night a hundred miles!—
O dearest William, stay!
The bell strikes twelve—dark, dismal hour!
O wait, my love, till day!"—

XXXIV. "Look here, look here—the moon shines clear—
Full fast I ween we ride;
Mount and away! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed.

XXXV. "The black barb snorts, the bridle rings;
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee!
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee."—

XXXVI. Strong love prevail'd: She busks, she bounes,
She mounts the barb behind,
And round her darling William's waist
Her lily arms she twined.

XXXVII. And, hurry! hurry! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be;
Spurn'd from the courser's thundering heels
The flashing pebbles flee.

XXXVIII. And on the right, and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view,
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,
And cot, and castle, flew.

XXXIX. "Sit fast—dost fear?—The moon shines clear—
Fleet goes my barb—keep hold!
Fear'st thou?"—"O no!" she faintly said;
"But why so stern and cold?

XL. "What yonder rings? what yonder sings?
Why shrieks the owlet grey?"—
"'Tis death-bells' clang, 'tis funeral song,
The body to the clay.

XLI. "With song and clang, at morrow's dawn,
Ye may inter the dead:
To-night I ride, with my young bride,
To deck our bridal bed.

XLII. "Come with thy choir, thou coffin'd guest,
To swell our nuptial song!
Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast!
Come all, come all along!"—

XLIII. Ceased clang and song; down sunk the bier;
The shrouded corpse arose:
And, hurry! hurry! all the train
The thundering steed pursues.

XLIV. And, forward! forward! on they go;
High snorts the straining steed;
Thick pants the rider's labouring breath,
As headlong on they speed.

XLV. "O William, why this savage haste?
And where thy bridal bed?"—
"'Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,
And narrow, trustless maid."—

XLVI. "No room for me?"—"Enough for both;—
Speed, speed, my barb, thy course!"
O'er thundering bridge, through boiling surge
He drove the furious horse.

XLVII. Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,
The flashing pebbles flee.

XLVIII. Fled past on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower!
On right and left fled past how fast
Each city, town, and tower!

XLIX. "Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear,
Dost fear to ride with me?—
Hurrah! hurrah! the dead can ride!"—
"O William, let them be!—

L. "See there, see there! What yonder swings
And creaks 'mid whistling rain?"—
"Gibbet and steel, th' accursed wheel;
A murderer in his chain.—

LI. "Hollo! thou felon, follow here:
To bridal bed we ride;
And thou shalt prance a fetter dance
Before me and my bride."—

LII. And, hurry! hurry! clash, clash, clash!
The wasted form descends;
And fleet as wind through hazel bush
The wild career attends.

LIII. Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing peebles flee.

LIV. How fled what moonshine faintly show'd!
How fled what darkness hid!
How fled the earth beneath their feet,
The heaven above their head!

LV. "Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear,
And well the dead can ride;
Does faithful Helen fear for them?"—
"O leave in peace the dead!"—

LVI. "Barb! Barb! methinks I hear the cock;
The sand will soon be run:
Barb! Barb! I smell the morning air;
The race is wellnigh done."—

LVII. Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

LVIII. "Hurrah! hurrah! well ride the dead;
The bride, the bride is come;
And soon we reach the bridal bed,
For, Helen, here's my home."—

LIX. Reluctant on its rusty hinge
Revolved an iron door,
And by the pale moon's setting beam
Were seen a church and tower.

LX. With many a shriek and cry whiz round
The birds of midnight, scared;
And rustling like autumnal leaves
Unhallow'd ghosts were heard.

LXI. O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale
He spurr'd the fiery horse,
Till sudden at an open grave
He check'd the wondrous course.

LXII. The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
The spur his gory heel.

LXIII. The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mould'ring flesh the bone,
Till Helen's lily arms entwine
A ghastly skeleton.

LXIV. The furious barb snorts fire and foam,
And, with a fearful bound,
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground.

LXV. Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres flit along,
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
And howl the funeral song;

LXVI. "E'en when the heart's with anguish cleft,
Revere the doom of Heaven,
Her soul is from her body reft;
Her spirit be forgiven!"

1796.

THE WILD HUNTSMAN

A translation, or rather an imitation, of the *Wilde Jäger* of the German poet Bürger.

The Wildgrave winds his bugle-horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lord pursue.

The eager pack, from couples freed,
Dash through the bush, the brier, the brake;
While answering hound, and horn, and steed,
The mountain echoes startling wake.

The beams of God's own hallow'd day
Had painted yonder spire with gold,
And, calling sinful man to pray,
Loud, long, and deep the bell had toll'd:

But still the Wildgrave onward rides;
Halloo, halloo! and, hark again!
When, spurring from opposing sides,
Two Stranger Horsemen join the train.

Who was each Stranger, left and right,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
The right-hand steel was silver white,
The left, the swarthy hue of hell.

The right-hand Horseman, young and fair,
His smile was like the morn of May;
The left, from eye of tawny glare,
Shot midnight lightning's lurid ray.

He waved his huntsman's cap on high,
Cried, "Welcome, welcome, noble lord!
What sport can earth, or sea, or sky,
To match the princely chase, afford!"—

"Cease thy loud bugle's changing knell,"
Cried the fair youth, with silver voice;
"And for devotion's choral swell,
Exchange the rude unhallow'd noise.

"To-day, the ill-omen'd chase forbear,
Yon bell yet summons to the fane;
To-day the Warning Spirit hear,
To-morrow thou mayst mourn in vain."—

"Away, and sweep the glades along!"
The Sable Hunter hoarse replies;
"To muttering monks leave matin-song,
And bells, and books, and mysteries."

The Wildgrave spurr'd his ardent steed,
And, launching forward with a bound,
"Who, for thy drowsy priestlike rede,
Would leave the jovial horn and hound?

"Hence, if our manly sport offend!
With pious fools go chant and pray:—
Well hast thou spoke, my dark-brow'd friend;
Halloo, halloo! and, hark away!"

The Wildgrave spurr'd his courser light,
O'er moss and moor, o'er holt and hill;
And on the left and on the right,
Each Stranger Horseman follow'd still.

Up springs, from yonder tangled thorn,
A stag more white than mountain snow;
And louder rung the Wildgrave's horn,
"Hark forward, forward! holla, ho!"

A heedless wretch has cross'd the way;
He gasps the thundering hoofs below;—
But, live who can, or die who may,
Still, "Forward, forward!" on they go.

See, where yon simple fences meet,
A field with Autumn's blessings crown'd;
See, prostrate at the Wildgrave's feet,
A husbandman with toil embrown'd:

"O mercy, mercy, noble lord!
Share the poor's pittance," was his cry,
"Earn'd by the sweat these brows have pour'd,
In scorching hour of fierce July."—

Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey;
The impetuous Earl no warning heeds,
But furious holds the onward way.

"Away, thou hound! so basely born,
Or dread the scourge's echoing blow!"—
Then loudly rung his bugle-horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"

So said, so done:—A single bound
Clears the poor labourer's humble pale:
Wild follows man, and horse, and hound,
Like dark December's stormy gale.

And man and horse, and hound and horn,
Destructive sweep the field along;
While, joying o'er the wasted corn,
Fell Famine marks the maddening throng.

Again uproused, the timorous prey
Scours moss and moor, and holt and hill;
Hard run, he feels his strength decay,
And trusts for life his simple skill.

Too dangerous solitude appear'd;
He seeks the shelter of the crowd;
Amid the flock's domestic herd
His harmless head he hopes to shroud.

O'er moss and moor, and holt and hill,
His track the steady blood-hounds trace;
O'er moss and moor, unwearied still,
The furious Earl pursues the chase.

Full lowly did the herdsman fall;—
"O spare, thou noble Baron, spare
These herds, a widow's little all;
These flocks, an orphan's fleecy care!"—

Earnest the right-hand Stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey;
The Earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
But furious keeps the onward way.

"Unmanner'd dog! To stop my sport
Vain were thy cant and beggar whine,
Though human spirits, of thy sort,
Were tenants of these carrion kine!"—

Again he winds his bugle-horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"
And through the herd, in ruthless scorn,
He cheers his furious hounds to go.

In heaps the throttled victims fall;
Down sinks their mangled herdsman near;
The murderous cries the stag appal,—
Again he starts, new-nerved by fear.

With blood besmear'd, and white with foam,
While big the tears of anguish pour,
He seeks, amid the forest's gloom,
The humble hermit's hallow'd bower.

But man and horse, and horn and hound,
Fast rattling on his traces go;
The sacred chapel rung around
With, "Hark away! and, holla, ho!"

All mild, amid the rout profane,
The holy hermit pour'd his prayer;
"Forbear with blood God's house to stain;
Revere his altar, and forbear!

"The meanest brute has rights to plead,
Which, wrong'd by cruelty, or pride,
Draw vengeance on the ruthless head:—
Be warn'd at length, and turn aside."

Still the Fair Horseman anxious pleads;
The Black, wild whooping, points the prey:—
Alas! the Earl no warning heeds,
But frantic keeps the forward way.

"Holy or not, or right or wrong,
Thy altar, and its rites, I spurn;
Not sainted martyrs' sacred song,
Not God himself, shall make me turn!"

He spurs his horse, he winds his horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"—
But off, on whirlwind's pinions borne,
The stag, the hut, the hermit, go.

And horse and man, and horn and hound,
And clamour of the chase, was gone;
For hoofs, and howls, and bugle-sound,
A deadly silence reign'd alone.

Wild gazed the affrighted Earl around;
He strove in vain to wake his horn,
In vain to call: for not a sound
Could from his anxious lips be borne.

He listens for his trusty hounds;
No distant baying reach'd his ears:
His courser, rooted to the ground,
The quickening spur unmindful bears.

Still dark and darker frown the shades,
Dark as the darkness of the grave;
And not a sound the still invades,
Save what a distant torrent gave.

High o'er the sinner's humbled head
At length the solemn silence broke;
And, from a cloud of swarthy red,
The awful voice of thunder spoke.

"Oppressor of creation fair!
Apostate Spirits' harden'd tool!
Scorner of God! Scourge of the poor!
The measure of thy cup is full.

"Be chased for ever through the wood;
For ever roam the affrighted wild;
And let thy fate instruct the proud,
God's meanest creature is his child."

'Twas hush'd:—One flash, of sombre glare,
With yellow tinged the forests brown:
Uprose the Wildgrave's bristling hair,
And horror chill'd each nerve and bone.

Cold pour'd the sweat in freezing rill;
A rising wind began to sing;
And louder, louder, louder still,
Brought storm and tempest on its wing.

Earth heard the call;—her entrails rend;
From yawning rifts, with many a yell,
Mix'd with sulphureous flames, ascend
The misbegotten dogs of hell.

What ghastly Huntsman next arose,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
His eye like midnight lightning glows,
His steed the swarthy hue of hell.

The Wildgrave flies o'er bush and thorn,
With many a shriek of helpless woe;
Behind him hound, and horse, and horn,
And, "Hark away, and holla, ho!"

With wild despair's reverted eye,
Close, close behind, he marks the throng,
With bloody fangs and eager cry;
In frantic fear he scours along.—

Still, still shall last the dreadful chase,
Till time itself shall have an end;
By day, they scour earth's cavern'd space,
At midnight's witching hour, ascend.

This is the horn, and hound, and horse,
That oft the lated peasant hears;
Appall'd, he signs the frequent cross,
When the wild din invades his ears.

The wakeful priest oft drops a tear
For human pride, for human woe,
When, at his midnight mass, he hears
The infernal cry of, "Holla, ho!"

1796.

THE FIRE-KING

"The blessings of the evil Genii, which are curses, were upon him."—
Eastern Tale.

Bold knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear;
And you haply may sigh, in the midst of your glee,
At the tale of Count Albert, and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high?
And see you that lady, the tear in her eye?
And see you that palmer, from Palestine's land,
The shell on his hat, and the staff in his hand?—

"Now palmer, grey palmer, O tell unto me,
What news bring you home from the Holy Countrie?
And how goes the warfare by Galilee's strand?
And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land?"—

"O well goes the warfare by Galilee's wave,
For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have;
And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
For the Heathen have lost, and the Christians have won."

[1] This ballad was written at the request of Mr. Lewis, to be inserted in his *Tales of Wonder*. It is the third in a series of four ballads, on the subject of Elementary Spirits. The story is, however, partly historical; for it is recorded, that, during the struggles of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, a Knight-Templar, called Saint-Alban, deserted to the Saracens, and defeated the Christians in many combats, till he was finally routed and slain, in a conflict with King Baldwin, under the walls of Jerusalem.

A fair chain of gold 'mid her ringlets there hung;
O'er the palmer's grey locks the fair chain has she flung:
"O palmer, grey palmer, this chain be thy fee,
For the news thou hast brought from the Holy Countrie.

"And, palmer, good palmer, by Galilee's wave,
O saw ye Count Albert, the gentle and brave?
When the Crescent went back, and the Red-cross rush'd on,
O saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon?"—

"O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows;
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows;
Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high;
But, lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die.

"The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin-scorch'd walls;
The pure stream runs muddy; the gay hope is gone;
Count Albert is prisoner on Mount Lebanon."

O she's ta'en a horse, should be fleet at her speed;
And she's ta'en a sword, should be sharp at her need;
And she has ta'en shipping for Palestine's land,
To ransome Count Albert from Soldanrie's hand.

Small thought had Count Albert on fair Rosalie,
Small thought on his faith, or his knighthood, had he;
A heathenish damsel his light heart had won,
The Soldan's fair daughter of Mount Lebanon.

"O Christian, brave Christian, my love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I hearken to thee:
Our laws and our worship on thee shalt thou take;
And this thou shalt first do for Zulema's sake.

"And, next, in the cavern, where burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Curdmans adore,
Alone, and in silence, three nights shalt thou wake;
And this thou shalt next do for Zulema's sake.

"And, last, thou shalt aid us with counsel and hand,
To drive the Frank robber from Palestine's land;
For my lord and my love then Count Albert I'll take,
When all this is accomplish'd for Zulema's sake."

He has thrown by his helmet, and cross-handled sword,
Renouncing his knighthood, denying his Lord;
He has ta'en the green caftan, and turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair Lebanon.

And in the dread cavern, deep deep under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel portals surround,
He has watch'd until daybreak, but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on its altar of stone.

Amazed was the Princess, the Soldan amazed,
Sore murmur'd the priests as on Albert they gazed;
They search'd all his garments, and, under his weeds,
They found, and took from him, his rosary beads.

Again in the cavern, deep deep under ground,
He watch'd the lone night, while the winds whistled round;
Far off was their murmur, it came not more nigh,
The flame burn'd unmoved, and nought else did he spy.

Loud murmur'd the priests, and amazed was the King,
While many dark spells of their witchcraft they sing;
They search'd Albert's body, and, lo! on his breast
Was the sign of the Cross, by his father impress'd.

The priests they erase it with care and with pain,
And the recreant return'd to the cavern again;
But, as he descended, a whisper there fell:
It was his good angel, who bade him farewell!

High bristled his hair, his heart flutter'd and beat,
And he turn'd him five steps, half resolved to retreat;
But his heart it was harden'd, his purpose was gone,
When he thought of the Maiden of fair Lebanon.

Scarce pass'd he the archway, the threshold scarce trode,
When the winds from the four points of heaven were abroad,
They made each steel portal to rattle and ring,
And, borne on the blast, came the dread Fire-King.

Full sore rock'd the cavern whene'er he drew nigh,
The fire on the altar blazed bickering and high;
In volcanic explosions the mountains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the Monarch of Flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistinguish'd in form,
His breath it was lightning, his voice it was storm;
I ween the stout heart of Count Albert was tame,
When he saw in his terrors the Monarch of Flame.

In his hand a broad falchion blue-glimmer'd through smoke,
And Mount Lebanon shook as the monarch he spoke:
"With this brand shalt thou conquer, thus long, and no more,
Till thou bend to the Cross, and the Virgin adore."

The cloud-shrouded Arm gives the weapon; and see!
The recreant receives the charm'd gift on his knee:
The thunders growl distant, and faint gleam the fires,
As, borne on the whirlwind, the phantom retires.

Count Albert has arm'd him the Paynim among,
Though his heart it was false, yet his arm it was strong;
And the Red-cross wax'd faint, and the Crescent came on,
From the day he commanded on Mount Lebanon.

From Lebanon's forests to Galilee's wave,
The sands of Samaar drank the blood of the brave;
Till the Knights of the Temple, and Knights of Saint John,
With Salem's King Baldwin, against him came on.

The war-cymbals clatter'd, the trumpets replied,
The lances were couch'd, and they closed on each side;
And horsemen and horses Count Albert o'erthrew,
Till he pierced the thick tumult King Baldwin unto.

Against the charm'd blade which Count Albert did wield,
The fence had been vain of the King's Red-cross shield;
But a Page thrust him forward the monarch before,
And cleft the proud turban the renegade wore.

So fell was the dint, that Count Albert stoop'd low
Before the cross'd shield, to his steel saddlebow;
And scarce had he bent to the Red-cross his head,—
"*Bonne Grace, Notre Dame!*" he unwittingly said.

Sore sigh'd the charm'd sword, for its virtue was o'er,
It sprung from his grasp, and was never seen more;
But true men have said, that the lightning's red wing
Did waft back the brand to the dread Fire-King.

He clench'd his set teeth, and his gauntleted hand;
He stretch'd, with one buffet, that Page on the strand;
As back from the stripling the broken casque roll'd,
You might see the blue eyes, and the ringlets of gold.

Short time had Count Albert in horror to stare
On those death-swimming eyeballs, and blood-clotted hair;
For down came the Templars, like Cedron in flood,
And dyed their long lances in Saracen blood.

The Saracens, Curdmans, and Ishmaelites yield
To the scallop, the saltier, and crossleted shield;
And the eagles were gorged with the infidel dead,
From Bethsaida's fountains to Naphthali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's plain.—
Oh, who is yon Paynim lies stretch'd 'mid the slain?
And who is yon Page lying cold at his knee?—
Oh, who but Count Albert and fair Rosalie!

The Lady was buried in Salem's bless'd bound,
The Count he was left to the vulture and hound:
Her soul to high mercy Our Lady did bring;
His went on the blast to the dread Fire-King.

Yet many a minstrel, in harping, can tell,
How the Red-cross it conquer'd, the Crescent it fell:
And lords and gay ladies have sigh'd, 'mid their glee,
At the tale of Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

1801.

FREDERICK AND ALICE [1]

Frederick leaves the land of France,
Homeward hastes his steps to measure,
Careless casts the parting glance
On the scene of former pleasure.

Joying in his prancing steed,
Keen to prove his untried blade,
Hope's gay dreams the soldier lead
Over mountain, moor, and glade.

Helpless, ruin'd, left forlorn,
Lovely Alice wept alone;
Mourn'd o'er love's fond contract torn,
Hope, and peace, and honour flown.

Mark her breast's convulsive throbs!
See, the tear of anguish flows!—
Mingling soon with bursting sobs,
Loud the laugh of frenzy rose.

Wild she curs'd, and wild she pray'd;
Seven long days and nights are o'er;
Death in pity brought his aid,
As the village bell struck four.

[1] This tale is imitated, rather than translated, from a fragment introduced in Goethe's *Claudina von Villa Bella*, where it is sung by a member of a gang of banditti, to engage the attention of the family, while his companions break into the castle. It owes any little merit it may possess to my friend Mr. Lewis, to whom it was sent in an extremely rude state; and who, after some material improvements, published it in his *Tales of Wonder*.

Far from her, and far from France,
Faithless Frederick onward rides;
Marking, blithe, the morning's glance
Mantling o'er the mountain's sides.

Heard ye not the boding sound,
As the tongue of yonder tower,
Slowly, to the hills around,
Told the fourth, the fated hour?

Starts the steed, and snuffs the air,
Yet no cause of dread appears;
Bristles high the rider's hair,
Struck with strange mysterious fears.

Desperate, as his terrors rise,
In the steed the spur he hides;
From himself in vain he flies;
Anxious, restless, on he rides.

Seven long days, and seven long nights,
Wild he wander'd, woe the while!
Ceaseless care, and causeless fright,
Urge his footsteps many a mile.

Dark the seventh sad night descends;
Rivers swell, and rain-streams pour;
While the deafening thunder lends
All the terrors of its roar.

Weary, wet, and spent with toil,
Where his head shall Frederick hide?
Where, but in yon ruin'd aisle,
By the lightning's flash descried.

To the portal, dank and low,
Fast his steed the wanderer bound:
Down a ruin'd staircase slow,
Next his darkling way he wound.

Long drear vaults before him lie!
Glimmering lights are seen to glide!—
"Blessed Mary, hear my cry!
Deign a sinner's steps to guide!"

Often lost their quivering beam,
Still the lights move slow before,
Till they rest their ghastly gleam
Right against an iron door.

Thundering voices from within,
Mix'd with peals of laughter, rose;
As they fell, a solemn strain
Lent its wild and wondrous close!

Midst the din, he seem'd to hear
Voice of friends, by death removed;—
Well he knew that solemn air,
'Twas the lay that Alice loved.—

Hark! for now a solemn knell
Four times on the still night broke;
Four times, at its deaden'd swell,
Echoes from the ruins spoke,

As the lengthen'd clangours die,
Slowly opes the iron door!
Straight a banquet met his eye,
But a funeral's form it wore!

Coffins for the seats extend;
All with black the board was spread;
Girt by parent, brother, friend,
Long since number'd with the dead!

Alice, in her grave-clothes bound,
Ghastly smiling, points a seat;
All arose, with thundering sound;
All the expected stranger greet.

High their meagre arms they wave,
Wild their notes of welcome swell;—
"Welcome, traitor, to the grave!
Perjured, bid the light farewell!"

1801.

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH [1]

'Twas when among our linden-trees
The bees had housed in swarms,
(And grey-hair'd peasants say that these
Betoken foreign arms,)

[1] These verses are a literal translation of an ancient Swiss ballad upon the battle of Sempach, fought 9th July, 1386, being the victory by which the Swiss cantons established their independence; the author, Albert Tchudi, denominated the Souter, from his profession of a shoemaker. He was a citizen of Lucerne, esteemed highly among his countrymen, both for his powers as a *Meister-Singer*, or minstrel, and his courage as a soldier; so that he might share the praise conferred by Collins on Æschylus, that—

"—— Not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot steel."

Then look'd we down to Willisow,
The land was all in flame;
We knew the Archduke Leopold
With all his army came.

The Austrian nobles made their vow,
So hot their heart and bold,
"On Switzer carles we'll trample now,
And slay both young and old."

With clarion loud, and banner proud,
From Zurich on the lake,
In martial pomp and fair array,
Their onward march they make.

"Now list, ye lowland nobles all—
Ye seek the mountain strand,
Nor wot ye what shall be your lot
In such a dangerous land.

"I rede ye, shrive ye of your sins,
Before ye farther go;
A skirmish in Helvetian hills
May send your souls to woe."—

"But where now shall we find a priest
Our shrift that he may hear?"—
"The Switzer priest has ta'en the field,
He deals a penance drear.

"Right heavily upon your head
He'll lay his hand of steel;
And with his trusty partisan
Your absolution deal."—

'Twas on a Monday morning then,
The corn was steep'd in dew,
And merry maids had sickles ta'en,
When the host to Sempach drew.

The stalwart men of fair Lucerne
Together have they join'd;
The pith and core of manhood stern,
Was none cast looks behind.

It was the Lord of Hare-castle,
And to the Duke he said,
"Yon little band of brethren true
Will meet us undismay'd."—

"O Hare-castle, thou heart of hare!"
Fierce Oxenstern replied.—
"Shalt see then how the game will fare,"
The taunted knight replied.

There was lacing then of helmets bright,
And closing ranks amain;
The peaks they hew'd from their boot-points
Might wellnigh load a wain.

And thus they to each other said,
"Yon handful down to hew
Will be no boastful tale to tell,
The peasants are so few."—

The gallant Swiss Confederates there
They pray'd to God aloud,
And he display'd his rainbow fair
Against a swarthy cloud.

Then heart and pulse throbb'd more and more
With courage firm and high,
And down the good Confederates bore
On the Austrian chivalry.

The Austrian Lion [1] 'gan to growl,
And toss his mane and tail;
And ball, and shaft, and crossbow bolt,
Went whistling forth like hail.

Lance, pike, and halbert mingled there,
The game was nothing sweet!
The boughs of many a stately tree
Lay shiver'd at their feet.

The Austrian men-at-arms stood fast,
So close their spears they laid;
It chafed the gallant Winkelreid,
Who to his comrades said—

"I have a virtuous wife at home,
A wife and infant son;
I leave them to my country's care,—
This field shall soon be won.

"These nobles lay their spears right thick,
And keep full firm array,
Yet shall my charge their order break,
And make my brethren way."

[1] A pun on the Archduke's name, Leopold.

He rush'd against the Austrian band,
In desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and hand,
Bore down each hostile spear.

Four lances splinter'd on his crest,
Six shiver'd in his side;
Still on the serried files he press'd—
He broke their ranks, and died.

This patriot's self-devoted deed
First tamed the Lion's mood,
And the four forest cantons freed
From thraldom by his blood.

Right where his charge had made a lane,
His valiant comrades burst,
With sword, and axe, and partisan,
And hack, and stab, and thrust.

The daunted Lion 'gan to whine,
And granted ground amain,
The Mountain Bull [1] he bent his brows,
And gored his sides again.

Then lost was banner, spear, and shield,
At Sempach in the flight,
The cloister vaults at Konig's-field
Hold many an Austrian knight.

It was the Archduke Leopold,
So lordly would he ride,
But he came against the Switzer churls,
And they slew him in his pride.

The heifer said unto the bull,
"And shall I not complain?
There came a foreign nobleman
To milk me on the plain.

"One thrust of thine outrageous horn
Has gall'd the knight so sore,
That to the churchyard he is borne
To range our glens no more."

An Austrian noble left the stour,
And fast the flight 'gan take;
And he arrived in luckless hour
At Sempach on the lake.

[1] A pun on the Urus, or wild-bull, which gives name to the Canton of Uri.

He and his squire a fisher call'd,
(His name was Hans Von Rot,)
" For love, or meed, or charity,
Receive us in thy boat! "

Their anxious call the fisher heard,
And, glad the meed to win,
His shallop to the shore he steer'd,
And took the flyers in.

And while against the tide and wind
Hans stoutly row'd his way,
The noble to his follower sign'd
He should the boatman slay.

The fisher's back was to them turn'd,
The squire his dagger drew,
Hans saw his shadow in the lake,
The boat he overthrew.

He 'whelmed the boat, and as they strove,
He stunn'd them with his oar,
" Now, drink ye deep, my gentle sirs,
You'll ne'er stab boatman more.

" Two gilded fishes in the lake
This morning have I caught,
Their silver scales may much avail,
Their carrion flesh is naught."

It was a messenger of woe
Has sought the Austrian land:
" Ah! gracious lady, evil news!
My lord lies on the strand.

" At Sempach, on the battle-field,
His bloody corpse lies there."—
" Ah, gracious God! " the lady cried,
" What tidings of despair! "

Now would you know the minstrel wight
Who sings of strife so stern,
Albert the Souter is he hight,
A burgher of Lucerne.

A merry man was he, I wot,
The night he made the lay,
Returning from the bloody spot,
Where God had judged the day.

1818.

THE NOBLE MORINGER[1]

I. O, will you hear a knightly tale of old Bohemian day,
It was the noble Moringer in wedlock bed he lay;
He halsed and kiss'd his dearest dame, that was as sweet as May,
And said, "Now, lady of my heart, attend the words I say.

II. "'Tis I have vow'd a pilgrimage unto a distant shrine,
And I must seek Saint Thomas-land, and leave the land that's mine;
Here shalt thou dwell the while in state, so thou wilt pledge thy fay,
That thou for my return wilt wait seven twelve-months and a day."

III. Then out and spoke that Lady bright, sore troubled in her cheer,
"Now tell me true, thou noble knight, what order takest thou here;
And who shall lead thy vassal band, and hold thy lordly sway,
And be thy lady's guardian true when thou art far away?"

IV. Out spoke the noble Moringer, "Of that have thou no care,
There's many a valiant gentleman of me holds living fair;
The trustiest shall rule my land, my vassals and my state,
And be a guardian tried and true to thee, my lovely mate.

V. "As Christian-man, I needs must keep the vow which I have plight,
When I am far in foreign land, remember thy true knight;

[1] The original occurs in a collection entitled, *Sammlung Deutschen Volkslieder*, Berlin, 1807, published by Messrs. Busching and Von der Hagen, both distinguished for their acquaintance with the ancient popular poetry and legendary history of Germany.

And cease, my dearest dame, to grieve, for vain were sorrow now,
But grant thy Moringer his leave, since God hath heard his vow."

VI. It was the noble Moringer from bed he made him boune,
And met him there his Chamberlain, with ewer and with gown:
He flung the mantle on his back, 'twas furr'd with miniver,
He dipp'd his hand in water cold, and bathed his forehead fair.

VII. "Now hear," he said, "Sir Chamberlain, true vassal art thou mine,
And such the trust that I repose in that proved worth of thine,
For seven years shalt thou rule my towers, and lead my vassal train,
And pledge thee for my Lady's faith till I return again."

VIII. The Chamberlain was blunt and true, and sturdily said he,
Abide, my lord, and rule your own, and take this rede from me;
That woman's faith's a brittle trust—Seven twelvemonths didst thou say?
I'll pledge me for no lady's truth beyond the seventh fair day."

IX. The noble Baron turn'd him round, his heart was full of care,
His gallant Esquire stood him nigh, he was Marstetten's heir,
To whom he spoke right anxiously, "Thou trusty squire to me,
Wilt thou receive this weighty trust when I am o'er the sea?

X. "To watch and ward my castle strong, and to protect my land,
And to the hunting or the host to lead my vassal band;
And pledge thee for my Lady's faith till seven long years are gone,
And guard her as Our Lady dear was guarded by Saint John."

XI. Marstetten's heir was kind and true, but fiery, hot, and young,
And readily he answer made with too presumptuous tongue;
"My noble lord, cast care away, and on your journey wend,
And trust this charge to me until your pilgrimage have end.

XII. "Rely upon my plighted faith, which shall be truly tried,
To guard your lands, and ward your towers, and with your vassals ride;
And for your lovely Lady's faith, so virtuous and so dear,
I'll gage my head it knows no change, be absent thirty year."

XIII. The noble Moringer took cheer when thus he heard him speak,
And doubt forsook his troubled brow, and sorrow left his cheek;
A long adieu he bids to all—hoists topsails, and away,
And wanders in Saint Thomas-land seven twelvemonths and a day.

XIV. It was the noble Moringer within an orchard slept,
When on the Baron's slumbering sense a boding vision crept;
And whisper'd in his ear a voice, "'Tis time, Sir Knight, to wake,
Thy lady and thy heritage another master take.

XV. "Thy tower another banner knows, thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy gallant vassal train;
And she, the Lady of thy love, so faithful once and fair,
This night within thy fathers' hall she weds Marstetten's heir."

XVI. It is the noble Moringer starts up and tears his beard,
"Oh would that I had ne'er been born! what tidings have I heard!
To lose my lordship and my lands the less would be my care,
But, God! that e'er a squire untrue should wed my Lady fair.

xvii. "O good Saint Thomas, hear," he pray'd, "my patron Saint art thou,
A traitor robs me of my land even while I pay my vow!
My wife he brings to infamy that was so pure of name,
And I am far in foreign land, and must endure the shame."

xviii. It was the good Saint Thomas, then, who heard his pilgrim's prayer,
And sent a sleep so deep and dead that it o'erpower'd his care;
He waked in fair Bohemian land outstretch'd beside a rill,
High on the right a castle stood, low on the left a mill.

xix. The Moringer he started up as one from spell unbound,
And dizzy with surprise and joy gazed wildly all around;
"I know my fathers' ancient towers, the mill, the stream I know,
Now blessed be my patron Saint who cheer'd his pilgrim's woe!"

xx. He leant upon his pilgrim staff, and to the mill he drew,
So alter'd was his goodly form that none their master knew;
The Baron to the miller said, "Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor palmer in your land what tidings may there be?"

xxi. The miller answered him again, "He knew of little news,
Save that the Lady of the land did a new bridegroom choose;
Her husband died in distant land, such is the constant word,
His death sits heavy on our souls, he was a worthy Lord.

xxii. "Of him I held the little mill which wins me living free,
God rest the Baron in his grave, he still was kind to me!

And when Saint Martin's tide comes round, and millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer shall have both cope and stole."

XXIII. It was the noble Moringer to climb the hill began,
And stood before the bolted gate a woe and weary man;
"Now help me, every saint in heaven that can compassion take,
To gain the entrance of my hall this woful match to break."

XXIV. His very knock it sounded sad, his call was sad and slow,
For heart and head, and voice and hand, were heavy all with woe;
And to the warder thus he spoke; "Friend, to thy Lady say,
A pilgrim from Saint Thomas-land craves harbour for a day.

XXV. "I've wander'd many a weary step, my strength is wellnigh done,
And if she turn me from her gate I'll see no morrow's sun;
I pray, for sweet Saint Thomas' sake, a pilgrim's bed and dole,
And for the sake of Moringer's, her once-loved husband's soul."

XXVI. It was the stalwart warder then he came his dame before,
"A pilgrim, worn and travel-toil'd, stands at the castle-door;
And prays, for sweet Saint Thomas' sake, for harbour and for dole,
And for the sake of Moringer, thy noble husband's soul."

XXVII. The Lady's gentle heart was moved, "Do up the gate," she said,
"And bid the wanderer welcome be to banquet and to bed;
And since he names my husband's name, so that he lists to stay,
These towers shall be his harbourage a twelvemonth and a day."

XXVIII. It was the stalwart warder then undid the portal broad,
It was the noble Moringer that o'er the threshold strode;
"And have thou thanks, kind heaven," he said,
"though from a man of sin,
That the true lord stands here once more his castle-gate within."

XXIX. Then up the halls paced Moringer, his step was sad and slow;
It sat full heavy on his heart, none seem'd their Lord to know;
He sat him on a lowly bench, oppress'd with woe and wrong,
Short space he sat, but ne'er to him seem'd little space so long.

XXX. Now spent was day, and feasting o'er, and come was evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made brides retire to nuptial bower;
"Our castle's wont," a brides-man said, "hath been both firm and long,
No guest to harbour in our halls till he shall chant a song."

XXXI. Then spoke the youthful bridegroom there as he sat by the bride,
"My merry minstrel folk," quoth he, "lay shalm and harp aside;
Our pilgrim guest must sing a lay, the castle's rule to hold,
And well his guerdon will I pay with garment and with gold."—

XXXII. "Chill flows the lay of frozen age," 'twas thus the pilgrim sung,
"Nor golden meed nor garment gay, unlocks his heavy tongue;
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay, at board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride with all her charms was mine.

XXXIII. "But time traced furrows on my face, and I grew silver-hair'd,
For locks of brown, and cheeks of youth, she left this brow and beard;

Once rich, but now a palmer poor, I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth the lay of frozen age."

xxxiv. It was the noble Lady there this woful lay that hears,
And for the aged pilgrim's grief her eye was dimm'd with tears;
She bade her gallant cupbearer a golden beaker take,
And bear it to the palmer poor to quaff it for her sake.

xxxv. It was the noble Moringer that dropp'd amid the wine
A bridal ring of burning gold so costly and so fine:
Now listen, gentles, to my song, it tells you but the sooth,
'Twas with that very ring of gold he pledged his bridal truth.

xxxvi. Then to the cupbearer he said, "Do me one kindly deed,
And should my better days return, full rich shall be thy meed;
Bear back the golden cup again to yonder bride so gay,
And crave her of her courtesy to pledge the palmer grey."

xxxvii. The cupbearer was courtly bred, nor was the boon denied,
The golden cup he took again, and bore it to the bride;
"Lady," he said, "your reverend guest sends this, and bids me pray,
That, in thy noble courtesy, thou pledge the palmer grey."

xxxviii. The ring hath caught the Lady's eye, she views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud, "The Moringer is here!"
Then might you see her start from seat, while tears in torrents fell,
But whether 'twas for joy or woe, the ladies best can tell.

XXXIX. But loud she utter'd thanks to Heaven, and every saintly power,
That had return'd the Moringer before the midnight hour;
And loud she utter'd vow on vow, that never was there bride,
That had like her preserved her troth, or been so sorely tried.

XL. "Yes, here I claim the praise," she said, "to constant matrons due,
Who keeps the troth that they have plight, so stedfastly and true;
For count the term howe'er you will, so that you count aright,
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out when bells toll twelve to-night."

XLI. It was Marstetten then rose up, his falchion there he drew,
He kneel'd before the Moringer, and down his weapon threw;
"My oath and knightly faith are broke," these were the words he said,
"Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword, and take thy vassal's head."

XLII. The noble Moringer he smiled, and then aloud did say,
"He gathers wisdom that hath roam'd seven twelvemonths and a day;
My daughter now hath fifteen years, fame speaks her sweet and fair,
I give her for the bride you lose, and name her for my heir.

XLIII. "The young bridegroom hath youthful bride, the old bridegroom the old,
Whose faith was kept till term and tide so punctually were told;
But blessings on the warder kind that oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I came a day too late."

1819.

THE ERL-KING

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE

O, who rides by night thro' the woodland so wild?
It is the fond father embracing his child;
And close the boy nestles within his loved arm,
To hold himself fast, and to keep himself warm.

"O father, see yonder! see yonder!" he says;
"My boy, upon what doest thou fearfully gaze?"—
"O, 'tis the Erl-King with his crown and his shroud."
"No, my son, it is but a dark wreath of the cloud."

The Erl-King speaks

"O come and go with me, thou loveliest child;
By many a gay sport shall thy time be beguiled;
My mother keeps for thee full many a fair toy,
And many a fine flower shall she pluck for my boy."

"O, father, my father, and did you not hear
The Erl-King whisper so low in my ear?"—
"Be still, my heart's darling—my child, be at ease;
It was but the wild blast as it sung thro' the trees."

Erl-King

"O wilt thou go with me, thou loveliest boy?
My daughter shall tend thee with care and with joy;
She shall bear thee so lightly thro' wet and thro' wild,
And press thee, and kiss thee, and sing to my child."

"O father, my father, and saw you not plain,
The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past thro' the rain?"—
"O yes, my loved treasure, I knew it full soon;
It was the grey willow that danced to the moon."

Erl-King

"O come and go with me, no longer delay,
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee away."—
"O father! O father! now, now keep your hold,
The Erl-King has seized me—his grasp is so cold!"

Sore trembled the father; he spurr'd thro' the wild,
Clasping close to his bosom his shuddering child;
He reaches his dwelling in doubt and in dread,
But, clasp'd to his bosom, the infant was *dead!*"

DRAMATIC PIECES

HALIDON HILL

A DRAMATIC SKETCH FROM SCOTTISH HISTORY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SCOTTISH

The Regent of Scotland.
Gordon, Swinton, Lennox, Sutherland, Ross, Maxwell, Johnstone, Lindesay, } *Scottish Chiefs and Nobles.*
Adam de Vipont, *a Knight Templar.*
The Prior of Maison-Dieu.
Reynald, *Swinton's Squire.*
Hob Hattely, *a Border Moss-Trooper.*
Heralds.

ENGLISH

King Edward III.
Chandos, Percy, Ribaumont, } *English and Norman Nobles.*
The Abbot of Walthamstow.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

The northern side of the eminence of Halidon. The back Scene represents the summit of the ascent, occupied by the Rear-guard of the Scottish army. Bodies of armed Men appear as advancing from different points, to join the main Body.

Enter DE VIPONT *and the* PRIOR OF MAISON-DIEU.

Vip. No farther, Father—here I need no guidance—
I have already brought your peaceful step
Too near the verge of battle.
Pri. Fain would I see you join some Baron's banner,
Before I say farewell. The honour'd sword
That fought so well in Syria, should not wave
Amid the ignoble crowd.
Vip. Each spot is noble in a pitched field,
So that a man has room to fight and fall on't.
But I shall find out friends. 'Tis scarce twelve years
Since I left Scotland for the wars of Palestine,
And then the flower of all the Scottish nobles
Were known to me; and I, in my degree,
Not all unknown to them.
Pri. Alas! there have been changes since that time!
The Royal Bruce, with Randolph, Douglas, Grahame,
Then shook in field the banners which now moulder
Over their graves i' the chancel.
Vip. And thence comes it,
That while I look'd on many a well-known crest
And blazon'd shield, as hitherward we came,
The faces of the Barons who displayed them
Were all unknown to me. Brave youths they seem'd;
Yet, surely, fitter to adorn the tilt-yard,
Than to be leaders of a war. Their followers,
Young like themselves, seem like themselves unpractised—
Look at their battle-rank.
Pri. I cannot gaze on't with undazzled eye,
So thick the rays dart back from shield and helmet,

And sword and battle-axe, and spear and pennon.
Sure 'tis a gallant show! The Bruce himself
Hath often conquer'd at the head of fewer
And worse appointed followers.
Vip. Ay, but 'twas Bruce that led them. Reverend Father,
'Tis not the falchion's weight decides a combat;
It is the strong and skilful hand that wields it.
Ill fate, that we should lack the noble King,
And all his champions now! Time call'd them not,
For when I parted hence for Palestine,
The brows of most were free from grizzled hair.
Pri. Too true, alas! But well you know, in Scotland
Few hairs are silver'd underneath the helmet;
'Tis cowls like mine which hide them. 'Mongst the laity,
War's the rash reaper, who thrusts in his sickle
Before the grain is white. In three-score years
And ten, which I have seen, I have outlived
Wellnigh two generations of our nobles.
The race which holds yon summit is the third.
Vip. Thou mayst outlive them also.
Pri. Heaven forfend!
My prayer shall be, that Heaven will close my eyes,
Before they look upon the wrath to come.
Vip. Retire, retire, good Father! Pray for Scotland—
Think not on me. Here comes an ancient friend,
Brother in arms, with whom to-day I'll join me.
Back to your choir, assemble all your brotherhood,
And weary Heaven with prayers for victory.
Pri. Heaven's blessing rest with thee,
Champion of Heaven, and of thy suffering country!
[*Exit Prior. Vipont draws a little aside and lets down the beaver of his helmet.*

Enter SWINTON, *followed by* REYNALD *and others, to whom he speaks as he enters.*

Swi. Halt here, and plant my pennon, till the Regent
Assign our band its station in the host.
Rey. That must be by the Standard. We have had
That right since good Saint David's reign at least.
Fain would I see the Marcher would dispute it.
Swi. Peace, Reynald! Where the general plants the soldier,
There is his place of honour, and there only
His valour can win worship. Thou'rt of those,
Who would have war's deep art bear the wild semblance
Of some disorder'd hunting, where, pell-mell,
Each trusting to the swiftness of his horse,
Gallants press on to see the quarry fall.
Yon steel-clad Southrons, Reynald, are no deer;
And England's Edward is no stag at bay.
Vip. [*advancing.*] There needed not, to blazon forth the Swinton,
His ancient burgonet, the sable Boar
Chain'd to the gnarl'd oak,[1]—nor his proud step,
Nor giant stature, nor the ponderous mace,
Which only he, of Scotland's realm, can wield:
His discipline and wisdom mark the leader,
As doth his frame the champion. Hail, brave Swinton!
Swi. Brave Templar, thanks! Such your cross'd shoulder speaks you;
But the closed visor, which conceals your features,

[1] "The armorial bearings of the ancient family of Swinton are *sable*, a cheveron, *or*, between three boars' heads erased, *argent*. CREST—a boar chained to a tree, and above, on an escroll, *J'espère*. SUPPORTERS—two boars standing on a compartment, whereon are the words, *Je Pense*."—*Douglas's Baronage*, p. 132.

Forbids more knowledge. Umfraville, perhaps—
Vip. [*unclosing his helmet.*] No; one less worthy of our sacred Order.
Yet, unless Syrian suns have scorch'd my features
Swart as my sable visor, Alan Swinton
Will welcome Symon Vipont.
Swi. [*embracing him.*] As the blithe reaper
Welcomes a practised mate, when the ripe harvest
Lies deep before him, and the sun is high!
Thou'lt follow yon old pennon, wilt thou not?
'Tis tatter'd since thou saw'st it, and the Boar-heads
Look as if brought from off some Christmas board,
Where knives had notch'd them deeply.
Vip. Have with them, ne'ertheless. The Stuart's Chequer,
The Bloody Heart of Douglas, Ross's Lymphads,
Sutherland's Wild-cats, nor the royal Lion,
Rampant in golden treasure, wins me from them.
We'll back the Boar-heads bravely. I see round them
A chosen band of lances—some well known to me.
Where's the main body of thy followers?
Swi. Symon de Vipont, thou dost see them all
That Swinton's bugle-horn can call to battle,
However loud it rings. There's not a boy
Left in my halls, whose arm has strength enough
To bear a sword—there's not a man behind,
However old, who moves without a staff.
Striplings and greybeards, every one is here,
And here all should be—Scotland needs them all;
And more and better men, were each a Hercules,
And yonder handful centuplied.
Vip. A thousand followers—such, with friends and kinsmen,
Allies and vassals, thou wert wont to lead—
A thousand followers shrunk to sixty lances
In twelve years' space?—And thy brave sons, Sir Alan?
Alas! I fear to ask.
Swi. All slain, De Vipont. In my empty home
A puny babe lisps to a widow'd mother,
"Where is my grandsire! wherefore do you weep!"
But for that prattler, Lyulph's house is heirless.
I'm an old oak, from which the foresters
Have hew'd four goodly boughs, and left beside me
Only a sapling, which the fawn may crush
As he springs over it.
Vip. All slain?—alas!
Swi. Ay, all, De Vipont. And their attributes,
John with the Long Spear—Archibald with the Axe—
Richard the Ready—and my youngest darling,
My Fair-hair'd William—do but now survive
In measures which the grey-hair'd minstrels sing,
When they make maidens weep.
Vip. These wars with England, they have rooted out
The flowers of Christendom. Knights, who might win
The sepulchre of Christ from the rude heathen,
Fall in unholy warfare!
Swi. Unholy warfare? ay, well hast thou named it;
But not with England—would her cloth-yard shafts
Had bored their cuirasses! Their lives had been
Lost like their grandsire's, in the bold defence
Of their dear country—but in private feud
With the proud Gordon, fell my Long-spear'd John,
He with the Axe, and he men call'd the Ready,
Ay, and my Fair-hair'd Will—the Gordon's wrath
Devour'd my gallant issue.

Vip. Since thou dost weep, their death is unavenged?
Swi. Templar, what think'st thou me?—See yonder rock,
From which the fountain gushes—is it less
Compact of adamant, though waters flow from it?
Firm hearts have moister eyes.—They *are* avenged;
I wept not till they were—till the proud Gordon
Had with his life-blood dyed my father's sword,
In guerdon that he thinn'd my father's lineage,
And then I wept my sons; and, as the Gordon
Lay at my feet, there was a tear for him,
Which mingled with the rest. We had been friends,
Had shared the banquet and the chase together,
Fought side by side,—and our first cause of strife,
Woe to the pride of both, was but a light one!
Vip. You are at feud, then, with the mighty Gordon?
Swi. At deadly feud. Here in this Border-land,
Where the sire's quarrels descend upon the son,
As due a part of his inheritance,
As the strong castle and the ancient blazon,
Where private Vengeance holds the scales of justice,
Weighing each drop of blood as scrupulously
As Jews or Lombards balance silver pence,
Not in this land, 'twixt Solway and Saint Abb's,
Rages a bitterer feud than mine and theirs,
The Swinton and the Gordon.
Vip. You, with some threescore lances—and the Gordon
Leading a thousand followers.
Swi. You rate him far too low. Since you sought Palestine,
He hath had grants of baronies and lordships
In the far-distant North. A thousand horse
His southern friends and vassals always number'd.
Add Badenoch kerne, and horse from Dey and Spey,
He'll count a thousand more.—And now, De Vipont,
If the Boar-heads seem in your eyes less worthy
For lack of followers—seek yonder standard—
The bounding Stag, with a brave host around it;
There the young Gordon makes his earliest field,
And pants to win his spurs. His father's friend,
As well as mine, thou wert—go, join his pennon,
And grace him with thy presence.
Vip. When you were friends, I was the friend of both,
And now I can be enemy to neither;
But my poor person, though but slight the aid,
Joins on this field the banner of the two
Which hath the smallest following.
Swi. Spoke like the generous Knight, who gave up all,
Leading and lordship, in a heathen land
To fight, a Christian soldier! Yet, in earnest,
I pray, De Vipont, you would join the Gordon
In this high battle. 'Tis a noble youth,—
So fame doth vouch him,—amorous, quick, and valiant;
Takes knighthood, too, this day, and well may use
His spurs too rashly in the wish to win them.
A friend like thee beside him in the fight,
Were worth a hundred spears, to rein his valour
And temper it with prudence:—'tis the aged eagle
Teaches his brood to gaze upon the sun,
With eye undazzled.
Vip. Alas! brave Swinton! Would'st thou train the hunter
That soon must bring thee to the bay? Your custom,
Your most unchristian, savage, fiend-like custom,
Binds Gordon to avenge his father's death.

Swi. Why, be it so! I look for nothing else:
My part was acted when I slew his father,
Avenging my four sons—Young Gordon's sword,
If it should find my heart, can ne'er inflict there
A pang so poignant as his father's did.
But I would perish by a noble hand,
And such will his be if he bear him nobly,
Nobly and wisely on this field of Halidon.

Enter a Pursuivant.

Pur. Sir Knights, to council!—'tis the Regent's order,
That knights and men of leading meet him instantly
Before the royal standard. Edward's army
Is seen from the hill-summit.
Swi. Say to the Regent, we obey his orders. [*Exit Pursuivant.*
[*To Reynald.*] Hold thou my casque, and furl my pennon up
Close to the staff. I will not show my crest,
Nor standard, till the common foe shall challenge them.
I'll wake no civil strife, nor tempt the Gordon
With aught that's like defiance.
Vip. Will he not know your features?
Swi. He never saw me. In the distant North,
Against his will, 'tis said, his friends detain'd him
During his nurture—caring not, belike,
To trust a pledge so precious near the Boar-tusks.
It was a natural but needless caution:
I wage no war with children, for I think
Too deeply on mine own.
Vip. I have thought on it, and will see the Gordon
As we go hence to council. I do bear
A cross, which binds me to be Christian priest,
As well as Christian champion. God may grant,
That I, at once his father's friend and yours,
May make some peace betwixt you.
Swi. When that your priestly zeal, and knightly valour,
Shall force the grave to render up the dead. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II.

The summit of Halidon Hill, before the Regent's Tent. The Royal Standard of Scotland is seen in the background, with the Pennons and Banners of the principal Nobles around it.

Council of Scottish Nobles and Chiefs. Sutherland, Ross, Lennox, Maxwell, and other Nobles of the highest rank, are close to the Regent's person, and in the act of keen debate. Vipont with Gordon and others remain grouped at some distance on the right hand of the Stage. On the left, standing also apart, is Swinton, alone and bare-headed. The Nobles are dressed in Highland or Lowland habits, as historical costume requires. Trumpets, Heralds, etc., are in attendance.

Len. Nay, Lordings, put no shame upon my counsels.
I did but say, if we retired a little,
We should have fairer field and better vantage.
I've seen King Robert—ay, The Bruce himself—
Retreat six leagues in length, and think no shame on't.
Reg. Ay, but King Edward sent a haughty message,
Defying us to battle on this field,
This very hill of Halidon; if we leave it
Unfought withal, it squares not with our honour.
Swi. [*apart.*] A perilous honour, that allows the enemy,
And such an enemy as this same Edward,
To choose our field of battle! He knows how
To make our Scottish pride betray its master
Into the pitfall.
[*During this speech the debate among the Nobles is continued.*
Suth. [*aloud.*] We will not back one furlong—not one yard,

No, nor one inch; where'er we find the foe,
Or where the foe finds us, there will we fight him.
Retreat will dull the spirit of our followers,
Who now stand prompt for battle.
Ross. My Lords, methinks great Morarchat [1] has doubts,
That, if his Northern clans once turn the seam
Of their check'd hose behind, it will be hard
To halt and rally them.
Suth. Say'st thou, MacDonnell? —Add another falsehood,
And name when Morarchat was coward or traitor?
Thine island race, as chronicles can tell,
Were oft affianced to the Southron cause;
Loving the weight and temper of their gold,
More than the weight and temper of their steel.
Reg. Peace, my Lords, ho!
Ross. [*throwing down his glove.*] MacDonnell will not peace! There lies my pledge,
Proud Morarchat, to witness thee a liar.
Max. Brought I all Nithsdale from the Western Border;
Left I my towers exposed to foraying England,
And thieving Annandale, to see such misrule?
John. Who speaks of Annandale? Dare Maxwell slander
The gentle House of Lochwood? [2]
Reg. Peace, Lordings, once again. We represent
The Majesty of Scotland—in our presence
Brawling is treason.
Suth. Were it in presence of the King himself,
What should prevent my saying—

Enter LINDESAY.

Lin. You must determine quickly. Scarce a mile
Parts our vanguard from Edward's. On the plain
Bright gleams of armour flash through clouds of dust,
Like stars through frost-mist—steeds neigh, and weapons clash—
And arrows soon will whistle—the worst sound
That waits on English war.—You must determine.
Reg. We are determined. We will spare proud Edward
Half of the ground that parts us.—Onward, Lords;
Saint Andrew strike for Scotland! We will lead
The middle ward ourselves, the Royal Standard
Display'd beside us; and beneath its shadow
Shall the young gallants, whom we knight this day,
Fight for their golden spurs.—Lennox, thou'rt wise,
And wilt obey command—lead thou the rear.
Len. The rear!—why I the rear? The van were fitter
For him who fought abreast with Robert Bruce.
Swi. [*apart.*] Discretion hath forsaken Lennox too!
The wisdom he was forty years in gathering
Has left him in an instant. 'Tis contagious
Even to witness frenzy.
Suth. The Regent hath determined well. The rear
Suits him the best who counsell'd our retreat.
Len. Proud Northern Thane, the van were soon the rear,
Were thy disorder'd followers planted there.
Suth. Then, for that very word, I make a vow,
By my broad Earldom, and my father's soul,
That, if I have not leading of the van,
I will not fight to-day!
Ross. Morarchat! thou the leading of the van!
Not whilst MacDonnell lives.
Swi. [*apart.*] Nay, then a stone would speak.
[*Addresses the Regent.*] May't please your Grace,
And you, great Lords, to hear an old man's counsel,

[1] Morarchate is the ancient Gaelic designation of the Earls of Sutherland.
[2] Lochwood Castle was the ancient seat of the Johnstones, Lords of Annandale.

That hath seen fights enow. These open bickerings
Dishearten all our host. If that your Grace,
With these great Earls and Lords, must needs debate,
Let the closed tent conceal your disagreement;
Else 'twill be said, ill fares it with the flock,
If shepherds wrangle, when the wolf is nigh.
Reg. The old Knight counsels well. Let every Lord
Or Chief, who leads five hundred men or more,
Follow to council—others are excluded—
We'll have no vulgar censurers of our conduct— [*Looking at Swinton.*
Young Gordon, your high rank and numerous following
Give you a seat with us, though yet unknighted.
Gordon. I pray you, pardon me. My youth's unfit
To sit in council, when that Knight's grey hairs
And wisdom wait without.
Reg. Do as you will; we deign not bid you twice.
[*The Regent, Ross, Sutherland, Lennox, Maxwell, etc., enter the Tent. The rest remain grouped about the Stage.*
Gor. [*observing Swi.*] That helmetless old Knight, his giant stature,
His awful accents of rebuke and wisdom,
Have caught my fancy strangely. He doth seem
Like to some vision'd form which I have dream'd of.
But never saw with waking eyes till now.
I will accost him.
Vip. Pray you, do not so;
Anon I'll give you reason why you should not.
There's other work in hand——
Gor. I will but ask his name. There's in his presence
Something that works upon me like a spell,
Or like the feeling made my childish ear
Dote upon tales of superstitious dread,
Attracting while they chill'd my heart with fear.
Now, born the Gordon, I do feel right well
I'm bound to fear nought earthly—and I fear nought.
I'll know who this man is——— [*Accosts Swinton.*
Sir Knight, I pray you, of your gentle courtesy,
To tell your honour'd name. I am ashamed,
Being unknown in arms, to say that mine
Is Adam Gordon.
Swi. [*shows emotion, but instantly subdues it.*] It is a name that soundeth in my ear
Like to a death-knell—ay, and like the call
Of the shrill trumpet to the mortal lists;
Yet, 'tis a name which ne'er hath been dishonour'd,
And never will, I trust—most surely never
By such a youth as thou.
Gor. There's a mysterious courtesy in this,
And yet it yields no answer to my question.
I trust you hold the Gordon not unworthy
To know the name he asks?
Swi. Worthy of all that openness and honour
May show to friend or foe—but, for my name,
Vipont will show it you; and, if it sound
Harsh in your ear, remember that it knells there
But at your own request. This day, at least,
Though seldom wont to keep it in concealment,
As there's no cause I should, *you* had not heard it.
Gor. This strange——
Vip. The mystery is needful. Follow me.
[*They retire behind the side scene.*
Swi. [*looking after them.*] 'Tis a brave youth. How blush'd his noble cheek,
While youthful modesty, and the embarrassment
Of curiosity, combined with wonder,

And half suspicion of some slight intended,
All mingled in the flush; but soon 'twill deepen
Into revenge's glow. How slow is Vipont!—
I wait the issue, as I've seen spectators
Suspend the motion even of the eyelids,
When the slow gunner, with his lighted match,
Approach'd the charged cannon, in the act
To awaken its dread slumbers.—Now 'tis out;
He draws his sword, and rushes towards me,
Who will nor seek nor shun him.

Enter GORDON, *withheld by* VIPONT.

Vip. Hold, for the sake of Heaven! O, for the sake
Of your dear country, hold!—Has Swinton slain your father,
And must you, therefore, be yourself a parricide,
And stand recorded as the selfish traitor,
Who in her hour of need, his country's cause
Deserts, that he may wreak a private wrong?
Look to yon banner—that is Scotland's standard;
Look to the Regent—he is Scotland's general;
Look to the English—they are Scotland's foemen!
Bethink thee, then, thou art a son of Scotland,
And think on nought beside.

Gor. He hath come here to brave me!—Off! unhand me!—
Thou canst not be my father's ancient friend,
That stand'st 'twixt me and him who slew my father.

Vip. You know not Swinton. Scarce one passing thought
Of his high mind was with you; now, his soul
Is fix'd on this day's battle. You might slay him
At unawares before he saw your blade drawn.—
Stand still, and watch him close.

Enter MAXWELL *from the tent.*

Swi. How go our councils, Maxwell, may I ask?

Max. As wild, as if the very wind and sea
With every breeze and every billow battled
For their precedence.

Swi. Most sure they are possess'd! Some evil spirit,
To mock their valour, robs them of discretion.
Fie, fie, upon't!—O, that Dunfermline's tomb
Could render up The Bruce! that Spain's red shore
Could give us back the good Lord James of Douglas!
Or that fierce Randolph, with his voice of terror,
Were here, to awe these brawlers to submission!

Vip. to Gor. Thou hast perused him at more leisure now.

Gor. I see the giant form which all men speak of,
The stately port—but not the sullen eye,
Not the bloodthirsty look, that should belong
To him that made me orphan. I shall need
To name my father twice ere I can strike
At such grey hairs, and face of such command!
Yet my hand clenches on my falchion hilt,
In token he shall die.

Vip. Need I again remind you, that the place
Permits not private quarrel?

Gor. I'm calm. I will not seek—nay, I will shun it—
And yet methinks that such debate's the fashion.
You've heard how taunts, reproaches, and the lie,
The lie itself, have flown from mouth to mouth;
As if a band of peasants were disputing
About a football match, rather than Chiefs
Were ordering a battle. I am young,
And lack experience; tell me, brave De Vipont,
Is such the fashion of your wars in Palestine?

Vip. Such it at times hath been; and then the Cross
Hath sunk before the Crescent. Heaven's cause
Won us not victory where wisdom was not.—
Behold yon English host come slowly on,
With equal front, rank marshall'd upon rank,
As if one spirit ruled one moving body;
The leaders, in their places, each prepared
To charge, support, and rally, as the fortune
Of changeful battle needs: then look on ours,
Broken, disjointed, as the tumbling surges
Which the winds wake at random. Look on both,
And dread the issue; yet there might be succour.
Gor. We're fearfully o'ermatch'd in discipline;
So even my inexperienced eye can judge.
What succour save in Heaven?
Vip. Heaven acts by human means. The artist's skill
Supplies in war, as in mechanic crafts,
Deficiency of tools. There's courage, wisdom,
And skill enough, live in one leader here,
As, flung into the balance, might avail
To counterpoise the odds 'twixt that ruled host
And our wild multitude.—I must not name him.
Gor. I guess, but dare not ask.—What band is yonder,
Arranged so closely as the English discipline
Hath marshall'd their best files?
Vip. Know'st thou not the pennon?
One day, perhaps, thou'lt see it all too closely;—
It is Sir Alan Swinton's.
Gor. These, then, are his,—the relics of his power;
Yet worth an host of ordinary men.—
And I must slay my country's sagest leader,
And crush by numbers that determined handful,
When most my country needs their practised aid,
Or will men say, "There goes degenerate Gordon;
His father's blood is on the Swinton's sword,
And his is in his scabbard!" [*Muses.*
Vip. [*apart.*] High blood and mettle, mix'd with early wisdom,
Sparkle in this brave youth. If he survive.
This evil-omen'd day, I pawn my word,
That, in the ruin which I now forbode,
Scotland has treasure left.—How close he eyes
Each look and step of Swinton! Is it hate,
Or is it admiration, or are both
Commingled strangely in that steady gaze?
[*Swinton and Maxwell return from the bottom of the stage.*
Max. The storm is laid at length amongst these counsellors;
See, they come forth.
Swi. And it is more than time;
For I can mark the vanguard archery
Handling their quivers—bending up their bows.

Enter the REGENT *and Scottish Lords.*

Reg. Thus shall it be, then, since we may no better,
And, since no Lord will yield not jot of way
To this high urgency, or give the vanguard
Up to another's guidance, we will abide them
Even on this bent; and as our troops are rank'd,
So shall they meet the foe. Chief, nor Thane,
Nor Noble, can complain of the precedence
Which chance has thus assign'd him.
Swi. [*apart.*] O, sage discipline,
That leaves to chance the marshalling of a battle!
Gor. Move him to speech, De Vipont.
Vip. Move *him!*—Move whom?
Gor. Even him, whom, but brief space since,

My hand did burn to put to utter silence.
Vip. I'll move it to him.—Swinton, speak to them,
They lack thy counsel sorely.
Swi. Had I the thousand spears which once I led,
I had not thus been silent. But men's wisdom
Is rated by their means. From the poor leader
Of sixty lances, who seeks words of weight?
Gor. [*steps forward.*] Swinton, there's that of wisdom on thy brow,
And valour in thine eye, and that of peril
In this most urgent hour, that bids me say,—
Bids me, thy mortal foe, say,—Swinton, speak,
For King and Country's sake!
Swi. Nay, if that voice commands me, speak I will;
It sounds as if the dead lays charge on me.
Reg. [*To Lennox, with whom he has been consulting.*]
'Tis better than you think. This broad hill-side
Affords fair compass for our power's display,
Rank above rank rising in seemly tiers;
So that the rearward stands as fair and open——
Swi. As e'er stood mark before an English archer.
Reg. Who dares to say so?—Who is't dare impeach
Our rule of discipline?
Swi. A poor Knight of these Marches, good my Lord;
Alan of Swinton, who hath kept a house here,
He and his ancestry, since the old days
Of Malcolm, called the Maiden.
Reg. You have brought here, even to this pitched field,
In which the Royal Banner is display'd,
I think some sixty spears, Sir Knight of Swinton;
Our musters name no more.
Swi. I brought each man I had; and Chief, or Earl,
Thane, Duke, or dignitary, brings no more:
And with them brought I what may here be useful—
An aged eye; which, what in England, Scotland,
Spain, France, and Flanders, hath seen fifty battles,
And ta'en some judgment of them; a stark hand too,
Which plays as with a straw with this same mace,—
Which if a young arm here can wield more lightly,
I never more will offer word of counsel.
Len. Hear him, my Lord; it is the noble Swinton—
He hath had high experience.
Max. He is noted
The wisest warrior 'twixt the Tweed and Solway,—
I do beseech you, hear him.
John. Ay, hear the Swinton—hear stout old Sir Alan;
Maxwell and Johnstone both agree for once.
Reg. Where's your impatience now?
Late you were all for battle, would not hear
Ourself pronounce a word—and now you gaze
On yon old warrior, in his antique armour,
As if he were arisen from the dead,
To bring us Bruce's counsel for the battle.
Swi. 'Tis a proud word to speak; but he who fought
Long under Robert Bruce, may something guess,
Without communication with the dead,
At what he would have counsell'd.—Bruce had bidden ye
Review your battle-order, marshall'd broadly
Here on the bare hill-side, and bidden you mark
Yon clouds of Southron archers, bearing down
To the green meadow-lands which stretch beneath—
The Bruce had warn'd you, not a shaft to-day
But shall find mark within a Scottish bosom,
If thus our field be order'd. The callow boys,

Who draw but four-foot bows, shall gall our front,
While on our mainward, and upon the rear,
The cloth-yard shafts shall fall like death's own darts,
And, though blind men discharge them, find a mark.
Thus shall we die the death of slaughter'd deer,
Which, driven into the toils, are shot at ease
By boys and women, while they toss aloft
All idly and in vain their branchy horns,
As we shall shake our unavailing spears,
Reg. Tush, tell not me! If their shot fall like hail,
Our men have Milan coats to bear it out.
Swi. Never did armourer temper steel on stithy
That made sure fence against an English arrow;
A cobweb gossamer were guard as good
Against a warp-sting.
Reg. Who fears a wasp-sting?
Swi. I, my Lord, fear none;
Yet should a wise man brush the insect off,
Or he may smart for it.
Reg. We'll keep the hill; it is the vantage-ground
When the main battle joins.
Swi. It ne'er will join, while their light archery
Can foil our spearmen and our barbed horse.
To hope Plantagenet would seek close combat,
When he can conquer riskless, is to deem
Sagacious Edward simpler than a babe
In battle-knowledge. Keep the hill, my Lord,
With the main body, if it is your pleasure;
But let a body of your chosen horse
Make execution on yon waspish archers.
I've done such work before, and love it well;
If 'tis your pleasure to give me the leading,
The dames of Sherwood, Inglewood, and Weardale,
Shall sit in widowhood and long for venison,
And long in vain. Whoe'er remembers Bannockburn,—
And when shall Scotsman, till the last loud trumpet,
Forget that stirring word!—knows *that* great battle
Even thus was fought and won.
Len. This is the shortest road to bandy blows;
For when the bills step forth and bows go back,
Then is the moment that our hardy spearmen,
With their strong bodies, and their stubborn hearts,
And limbs well knit by mountain exercise,
At the close tug shall foil the short-breath'd Southron.
Swi. I do not say the field will thus be won;
The English host is numerous, brave, and loyal;
Their Monarch most accomplish'd in war's art,
Skill'd, resolute, and wary——
Reg. And if your scheme secure not victory,
What does it promise us?
Swi. This much at least,—
Darkling we shall not die: the peasant's shaft,
Loosen'd perchance without an aim or purpose,
Shall not drink up the life-blood we derive
From those famed ancestors, who made their breasts
This frontier's barrier for a thousand years.
We'll meet these Southron bravely hand to hand,
And eye to eye, and weapon against weapon;
Each man who falls shall see the foe who strikes him.
While our good blades are faithful to the hilts,
And our good hands to these good blades are faithful,
Blow shall meet blow, and none fall unavenged—
We shall not bleed alone.
Reg. And this is all
Your wisdom hath devised?

Swi. Not all; for I would pray you, noble Lords,
(If one, among the guilty guiltiest, might,)
For this one day to charm to ten hours' rest
The never-dying worm of deadly feud,
That gnaws our vexed hearts—think no one foe
Save Edward and his host:—days will remain,
Ay, days by far too many will remain,
To avenge old feuds or struggles for precedence;—
Let this one day be Scotland's.—For myself,
If there is any here may claim from me
(As well may chance) a debt of blood and hatred,
My life is his to-morrow unresisting,
So he to-day will let me do the best
That my old arm may achieve for the dear country
That's mother to us both.
[*Gordon shows much emotion during this and the preceding speech of Swinton.*
Reg. It is a dream—a vision!—if one troop
Rush down upon the archers, all will follow,
And order is destroy'd—we'll keep the battle rank
Our fathers wont to do. No more on 't.—Ho!
Where be those youths seek knighthood from our sword?
Her. Here are the Gordon, Somerville, and Hay,
And Hepburn, with a score of gallants more.
Reg. Gordon, stand forth.
Gor. I pray your Grace, forgive me.
Reg. How! seek you not for knighthood?
Gor. I do thirst for 't.
But, pardon me—'tis from another sword.
Reg. It is your Sovereign's—seek you for a worthier?
Gor. Who would drink purely, seeks the secret fountain,
How small soever—not the general stream,
Though it be deep and wide. My Lord, I seek
The boon of knighthood from the honour'd weapon
Of the best knight, and of the sagest leader,
That ever graced a ring of chivalry.
—Therefore, I beg the boon on bended knee,
Even from Sir Alan Swinton. [*Kneels.*
Reg. Degenerate boy! Abject at once and insolent!—
See, Lords, he kneels to him that slew his father!
Gor. [*starting up.*] Shame be on him, who speaks such shameful word!
Shame be on him, whose tongue would sow dissension,
When most the time demands that native Scotsmen
Forget each private wrong!
Swi. [*interrupting him.*] Youth, since you crave me
To be your sire in chivalry, I remind you
War has it duties, Office has its reverence;
Who governs in the Sovereign's name is Sovereign;—
Crave the Lord Regent's pardon.
Gor. You task me justly, and I crave his pardon,
[*Bows to the Regent.*
His and these noble Lords'; and pray them all
Bear witness to my words.—Ye noble presence,
Here I remit unto the Knight of Swinton
All bitter memory of my father's slaughter,
All thoughts of malice, hatred, and revenge;
By no base fear or composition moved,
But by the thought, that in our country's battle
All hearts should be as one. I do forgive him
As freely as I pray to be forgiven,
And once more kneel to him to sue for knighthood.
Swi. [*affected, and drawing his sword.*]
Alas! brave youth, 'tis I should knee to you,
And, tendering thee the hilt of the fell sword
That made thee fatherless, bid thee use the point

After thine own discretion. For thy boon—
Trumpets be ready—In the Holiest name,
And in Our Lady's and Saint Andrew's name,
[*Touching his shoulder with his sword.*
I dub thee Knight!—Arise, Sir Adam Gordon!
Be faithful, brave, and O, be fortunate,
Should this ill hour permit!
[*The trumpets sound: the Herald's cry* "Largesse," *and the Attendants shout* "A Gordon! A Gordon!"
Reg. Beggars and flatterers! Peace, peace, I say!
We'll to the Standard; knights shall there be made
Who will with better reason crave your clamour.
Len. What of Swinton's counsel?
Here's Maxwell and myself think it worth nothing.
Reg. [*with concentrated indignation.*]
Let the best knight, and let the sagest leader,—
So Gordon quotes the man who slew his father,—
With his old pedigree and heavy mace,
Essay the adventure if it pleases him,
With his fair threescore horse. As for ourselves,
We will not peril aught upon the measure.
Gor. Lord Regent, you mistake; for if Sir Alan
Shall venture such attack, each man who calls
The Gordon chief, and hopes or fears from him
Or good or evil, follows Swinton's banner
In this achievement.
Reg. Why, God ha' mercy! This is of a piece.
Let young and old e'en follow their own counsel,
Since none will list to mine.
Ross. The Border cockerel fain would be on horseback;
'Tis safe to be prepared for fight or flight:
And this comes of it to give Northern lands
To the false Norman blood.
Gor. Hearken, proud Chief of Isles! Within my stalls
I have two hundred horse; two hundred riders
Mount guard upon my castle, who would tread
Into the dust a thousand of your Redshanks,
Nor count it a day's service.
Swi. Hear I this
From thee, young man, and on the day of battle?
And to the brave MacDonnell?
Gor. 'Twas he that urged me; but I am rebuked.
Reg. He crouches like a leash-hound to his master!
Swi. Each hound must do so that would head the deer—
'Tis mongrel curs that snatch at mate or master.
Reg. Too much of this. Sirs, to the Royal Standard!
I bid you, in the name of good King David.
Sound trumpets—sound for Scotland and King David!
[*The Regent and the rest go off, and the Scene closes. Manent Gordon, Swinton, and Vipont, with Reynald and followers. Lennox follows the Regent; but returns, and addresses Swinton.*
Len. O, were my western horsemen but come up,
I would take part with you!
Swi. Better that you remain.
They lack discretion; such grey head as yours
May best supply that want.
Lennox, mine ancient friend, and honour'd lord,
Farewell, I think, for ever!
Len. Farewell, brave friend!—and farewell, noble Gordon,
Whose sun will be eclipsed even as it rises!—
The Regent will not aid you.
Swi. We will so bear us, that as soon the bloodhound
Shall halt, and take no part, what time his comrade
Is grappling with the deer, as he stand still,
And see us overmatch'd.
Len. Alas! thou dost not know how mean his pride is,
How strong his envy.

Swi. Then we will die, and leave the shame with him.

[*Exit Lennox.*

Vip. [*to Gordon.*] What ails thee, noble youth? What means this pause?
Thou dost not rue thy generosity?

Gor. I have been hurried on by strong impulse,
Like to a bark that scuds before the storm,
Till driven upon some strange and distant coast,
Which never pilot dream'd of.—Have I not forgiven?
And am I not still fatherless?

Swi. Gordon, no;
For while we live I am a father to thee.

Gor. Thou, Swinton?—no!—that cannot, cannot be.

Swi. Then change the phrase, and say, that while we live,
Gordon shall be my son. If thou art fatherless,
Am I not childless too? Bethink thee, Gordon,
Our death-feud was not like the household fire,
Which the poor peasant hides among its embers,
To smoulder on, and wait a time for waking.
Ours was the conflagration of the forest,
Which, in its fury, spares nor sprout nor stem,
Hoar oak, nor sapling—not to be extinguish'd,
Till Heaven, in mercy, sends down all her waters;
But, once subdued, its flame is quenched for ever;
And spring shall hide the tract of devastation,
With foliagé and with flowers.—Give me thy hand.

Gor. My hand and heart!—And freely now!—to fight!

Vip. How will you act? [*To Swinton.*] The Gordon's band and thine
Are in the rearward left, I think, in scorn—
Ill post for them who wish to charge the foremost!

Swi. We'll turn that scorn to vantage, and descend
Sidelong the hill—some winding path there must be—
O, for a well-skill'd guide!

[*Hob Hattely starts up from a Thicket.*

Hob. So here he stands.—An ancient friend, Sir Alan.
Hob Hattely, or, if you like it better,
Hob of the Heron Plume, here stands your guide.

Swi. An ancient friend?—a most notorious knave,
Whose throat I've destined to the dodder'd oak
Before my castle, these ten months and more.
Was it not you who drove from Simprim-mains,
And Swinton-quarter, sixty head of cattle?

Hob. What then, if now I lead your sixty lances
Upon the English flank, where they'll find spoil
Is worth six hundred beeves?

Swi. Why, thou canst do it, knave. I would not trust thee
With one poor bullock; yet would risk my life,
And all my followers, on thine honest guidance.

Hob. There is a dingle, and a most discreet one,
(I've trod each step by star-light,) that sweeps round
The rearward of this hill, and opens secretly
Upon the archers' flank.—Will not that serve
Your present turn, Sir Alan?

Swi. Bravely, bravely!

Gor. Mount, sirs, and cry my slogan.
Let all who love the Gordon follow me!

Swi. Ay, let all follow—but in silence follow.
Scare not the hare that's couchant on her form—
The cushat from her nest—brush not, if possible,
The dew-drop from the spray—
Let no one whisper, until I cry, "Havoc!"
Then shout as loud's ye will.—On, on, brave Hob;
On, thou false thief, but yet most faithful Scotsman!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.—Scene I.

A rising Ground immediately in front of the Position of the English Main Body. Percy, Chandos, Ribaumont, and other English and Norman Nobles are grouped on the Stage.

Per. The Scots still keep the hill—the sun grows high.
Would that the charge would sound.
Cha. Thou scent'st the slaughter, Percy.—Who comes here?

Enter the Abbot of Walthamstow

Now, by my life, the holy priest of Walthamstow,
Like to a lamb among a herd of wolves!
See, he's about to bleat.
Ab. The King, methinks, delays the onset long.
Cha. Your general, Father, like your rat-catcher
Pauses to bait his traps, and set his snares.
Ab. The metaphor is decent.
Cha. Reverend sir,
I will uphold it just. Our good King Edward
Will presently come to this battle-field,
And speak to you of the last tilting match,
Or of some feat he did a twenty years since;
But not a word of the day's work before him,
Even as the artist, sir, whose name offends you,
Sits prosing o'er his can, until the trap fall,
Announcing that the vermin are secured,
And then 'tis up, and on them.
Per. Chandos, you give your tongue too bold a licence.
Cha. Percy, I am a necessary evil.
King Edward would not want me, if he could,
And could not, if he would. I know my value.
My heavy hand excuses my light tongue.
So men wear weighty swords in their defence,
Although they may offend the tender shin,
When the steel-boot is doff'd.
Ab. My Lord of Chandos,
This is but idle speech on brink of battle,
When Christian men should think upon their sins;
For as the tree falls, so the trunk must lie,
Be it for good or evil. Lord, bethink thee,
Thou hast withheld from our most reverend house,
The tithes of Everingham and Settleton;
Wilt thou make satisfaction to the Church
Before her thunders strike thee? I do warn thee
In most paternal sort.
Cha. I thank you, Father, filially.
Though but a truant son of Holy Church,
I would not choose to undergo her censures,
When Scottish blades are waving at my throat.
I'll make fair composition.
Ab. No composition; I'll have all, or none.
Cha. None, then — 'tis soonest spoke. I'll take my chance,
And trust my sinful soul to Heaven's mercy,
Rather than risk my worldly goods with thee—
My hour may not be come.
Ab. Impious—impenitent—
Per. Hush! the King—the King!

Enter King Edward, *attended by* Baliol *and others.*

King [*apart to Cha.*] Hark hither, Chandos!—Have the Yorkshire archers
Yet join'd the vanguard?
Cha. They are marching thither.
K. Ed. Bid them make haste, for shame—send a quick rider.
The loitering knaves! were it to steal my venison,
Their steps were light enough.—How now, Sir Abbot?
Say, is your Reverence come to study with us
The princely art of war?

Ab. I've had a lecture from my
Lord of Chandos,
In which he term'd your Grace a rat-
catcher.
K. Ed. Chandos, how's this?
Cha. O, I will prove it, sir!—
These skipping Scots
Have changed a dozen times 'twixt
Bruce and Baliol,
Quitting each House when it began
to totter;
They're fierce and cunning, treacher-
ous, too, as rats,
And we, as such, will smoke them
in their fastnesses.
K. Ed. These rats have seen your
back, my Lord of Chandos,
And noble Percy's too.
Per. Ay; but the mass which now
lies weltering
On yon hill side, like a Leviathan
That's stranded on the shallows,
then had soul in 't,
Order and discipline, and power of
action.
Now 'tis a headless corpse, which
only shows,
By wild convulsions, that some life
remains in 't.
K. Ed. True, they had once a
head; and 'twas a wise,
Although a rebel head.
Ab. [*bowing to the King.*] Would
he were here! we should find
one to match him.
K. Ed. There's something in that
wish which wakes an echo
Within my bosom. Yet it is as well,
Or better, that The Bruce is in his
grave.
We have enough of powerful foes on
earth,—
No need to summon them from other
worlds.
Per. Your Grace ne'er met the
Bruce?
K. Ed. Never himself; but in my
earliest field,
I did encounter with his famous
captains,
Douglas and Randolph. Faith!
they press'd me hard.
Ab. My Liege, if I might urge you
with a question,
Will the Scots fight to-day?
K. Ed. [*sharply.*] Go look your
breviary.
Cha. [*apart.*] The Abbot has it—
Edward will not answer
On that nice point. We must ob-
serve his humour.—
[*Addresses the King.*
Your first campaign, my Liege?—
That was in Weardale,
When Douglas gave our camp yon
midnight ruffle,
And turn'd men's beds to biers?
K. Ed. Ay, by Saint Edward!—
I escaped right nearly.
I was a soldier then for holidays,
And slept not in mine armour: my
safe rest
Was startled by the cry of "Douglas!
Douglas!"
And by my couch, a grisly chamber-
lain,
Stood Alan Swinton, with his bloody
mace.
It was a churchman saved me—my
stout chaplain,
Heaven quit his spirit! caught a
weapon up,
And grappled with the giant.—How
now, Louis!

Enter an Officer, who whispers the KING.

K. Ed. Say to him,—thus—and
thus— [*Whispers.*
Ab. That Swinton's dead. A
monk of ours reported,
Bound homeward from St. Ninian's
pilgrimage,
The Lord of Gordon slew him.
Per. Father, and if your house
stood on our borders,
You might have cause to know that
Swinton lives,
And is on horseback yet.
Cha. He slew the Gordon,
That's all the difference—a very
trifle.
Ab. Trifling to those who wage a
war more noble
Than with the arm of flesh.
Cha. [*apart.*] The Abbot's vex'd,
I'll rub the sore for him.—
[*Aloud.*] I have seen priests that
used that arm of flesh,
And used it sturdily.—Most reverend
Father,
What say you to the chaplain's deed
of arms
In the King's tent at Weardale?
Ab. It was most sinful, being
against the canon
Prohibiting all churchmen to bear
weapons;

And as he fell in that unseemly guise,
Perchance his soul may rue it.
K. Ed. [*overhearing the last words.*] Who may rue?
And what is to be rued?
Cha. [*apart.*] I'll match his Reverence for the tithes of Everingham.
—The Abbot says, my Liege, the deed was sinful,
By which your chaplain, wielding secular weapons,
Secured your Grace's life and liberty,
And that he suffers for 't in purgatory.
K. Ed. [*to the Abbot.*] Say'st thou my chaplain is in purgatory?
Ab. It is the canon speaks it, good my Liege.
K. Ed. In purgatory! thou shalt pray him out on't,
Or I will make thee wish thyself beside him.
Ab. My Lord, perchance his soul is past the aid
Of all the Church may do—there is a place
From which there's no redemption.
K. Ed. And if I thought my faithful chaplain there,
Thou shouldst there join him, priest!—Go, watch, fast, pray,
And let me have such prayers as will storm Heaven—
None of your maim'd and mutter'd hunting masses.
Ab. [*apart to Cha.*] For God's sake take him off.
Cha. Wilt thou compound, then, The tithes of Everingham?
K. Ed. I tell thee, if thou bear'st the keys of Heaven,
Abbot, thou shalt not turn a bolt with them
'Gainst any well-deserving English subject.
Ab. [*to Cha.*] We will compound, and grant thee, too, a share
I' the next indulgence. Thou dost need it much,
And greatly 'twill avail thee.
Cha. Enough—we're friends, and when occasion serves,
I will strike in.——
[*Looks as if towards the Scottish Army.*
K. Ed. Answer, proud Abbot; is my chaplain's soul,
If thou knowest aught on 't, in the evil place?
Cha. My Liege, the Yorkshire men have gain'd the meadow.
I see the pennon green of merry Sherwood.
K. Ed. Then give the signal instant! We have lost
But too much time already.
Ab. My Liege, your holy chaplain's blessed soul—
K. Ed. To hell with it and thee! Is this a time
To speak of monks and chaplains?
[*Flourish of Trumpets, answered by a distant sound of Bugles.*
See, Chandos, Percy—Ha, Saint George! Saint Edward!
See it descending now, the fatal hail-shower,
The storm of England's wrath—sure, swift, resistless,
Which no mail-coat can brook.—Brave English hearts!
How close they shoot together!—as one eye
Had aim'd five thousand shafts—as if one hand
Had loosed five thousand bow-strings!
Per. The thick volley
Darkens the air, and hides the sun from us.
K. Ed. It falls on those shall see the sun no more.
The winged, the resistless plague is with them.
How their vex'd host is reeling to and fro,
Like the chafed whale with fifty lances in him,
They do not see, and cannot shun the wound.
The storm is viewless, as death's sable wing,
Unerring as his scythe.
Per. Horses and riders are going down together.
'Tis almost pity to see nobles fall,
And by a peasant's arrow.
Bal. I could weep them,
Although they are my rebels.
Cha. [*aside to Per.*] His conquerors, he means, who cast him out
From his usurped kingdom.—[*Aloud.*] 'Tis the worst of it,
That knights can claim small honour in the field
Which archers win, unaided by our lances.

K. Ed. The battle is not ended. [*Looks towards the Field.*
Not ended?—scarce begun! What horse are these,
Rush from the thicket underneath the hill?
Per. They're Hainaulters, the followers of Queen Isabel.
K. Ed. [*hastily.*] Hainaulters!—thou art blind — wear Hainaulters
Saint Andrew's silver cross?—or would they charge
Full on our archers, and make havoc of them?—
Bruce is alive again—ho, rescue! rescue!—
Who was't survey'd the ground?
Riba. Most royal Liege—
K. Ed. A rose hath fallen from thy chaplet, Ribaumont.
Riba. I'll win it back, or lay my head beside it. [*Exit.*
K. Ed. Saint George! Saint Edward! Gentlemen, to horse,
And to the rescue!—Percy, lead the bill-men;
Chandos, do thou bring up the men-at-arms.—
If yonder numerous host should now bear down
Bold as their vanguard, [*to the Abbot,*] thou mayst pray for us,
We may need good men's prayers.—To the rescue,
Lords, to the rescue! ha, Saint George! Saint Edward!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A part of the Field of Battle betwixt the two Main Armies. Tumults behind the scenes; alarms, and cries of "Gordon, a Gordon," "Swinton," etc.

Enter, as victorious over the English vanguard, Vipont, Reynald, *and others.*
Vip. 'Tis sweet to hear these war-cries sound together,—
Gordon and Swinton.
Rey. 'Tis passing pleasant, yet 'tis strange withal.
Faith, when at first I heard the Gordon's slogan
Sounded so near me, I had nigh struck down
The knave who cried it.

Enter Swinton *and* Gordon.
Swi. Pitch down my pennon in yon holly bush.
Gor. Mine in the thorn beside it; let them wave,
As fought this morn their masters, side by side.
Swi. Let the men rally, and restore their ranks
Here in this vantage-ground—disorder'd chase
Leads to disorder'd flight; we have done our part,
And if we're succour'd now, Plantagenet
Must turn his bridle southward.—
Reynald, spur to the Regent with the basnet
Of stout De Grey, the leader of their vanguard;
Say, that in battle-front the Gordon slew him,
And by that token bid him send us succour.
Gor. And tell him that when Selby's headlong charge
Had wellnigh born me down, Sir Alan smote him.
I cannot send his helmet, never nut-shell
Went to so many shivers.—Harkye, grooms!
[*To those behind the scenes.*
Why do you let my noble steed stand stiffening
After so hot a course?
Swi. Ay, breathe your horses, they'll have work anon,
For Edward's men-at-arms will soon be on us,
The flower of England, Gascony, and Flanders;
But with swift succour we will bide them bravely.—
De Vipont, thou look'st sad?
Vip. It is because I hold a Templar's sword
Wet to the crossed hilt with Christian blood.
Swi. The blood of English archers —what can gild
A Scottish blade more bravely?
Vip. Even therefore grieve I for those gallant yeomen,
England's peculiar and appropriate sons,
Known in no other land. Each boasts his hearth

And field as free as the best lord his barony,
Owing subjection to no human vassalage,
Save to their King and law. Hence are they resolute,
Leading the van on every day of battle,
As men who know the blessings they defend.
Hence are they frank and generous in peace,
As men who have their portion in its plenty.
No other kingdom shows such worth and happiness
Veil'd in such low estate—therefore I mourn them.
Swi. I'll keep my sorrow for our native Scots,
Who, spite of hardship, poverty, oppression,
Still follow to the field their Chieftain's banner,
And die in the defence on't.
Gor. And if I live and see my halls again,
They shall have portion in the good they fight for.
Each hardy follower shall have his field,
His household hearth and sod-built home, as free
As ever Southron had. They shall be happy!—
And my Elizabeth shall smile to see it—
I have betray'd myself.
Swi. Do not believe it.—
Vipont, do thou look out from yonder height,
And see what motion in the Scottish host,
And in King Edward's.—
[*Exit Vipont.*
Now I will counsel thee;
The Templar's ear is for no tale of love,
Being wedded to his Order. But I tell thee,
The brave young knight that hath no lady-love
Is like a lamp unlighted; his brave deeds,
And its rich painting, do seem then most glorious,
When the pure ray gleams through them.—
Hath thy Elizabeth no other name?
Gor. Must I then speak of her to you, Sir Alan?
The thought of thee, and of thy matchless strength,
Hath conjured phantoms up amongst her dreams.
The name of Swinton hath been spell sufficient
To chase the rich blood from her lovely cheek,
And wouldst thou now know hers?
Swi. I would, nay must.
Thy father in the paths of chivalry,
Should know the load-star thou dost rule thy course by.
Gor. Nay, then, her name is—hark—— [*Whispers.*
Swi. I know it well, that ancient northern house.
Gor. O, thou shalt see its fairest grace and honour
In my Elizabeth. And if music touch thee———
Swi. It did, before disasters had untuned me.
Gor. O, her notes
Shall hush each sad remembrance to oblivion,
Or melt them to such gentleness of feeling,
That grief shall have its sweetness. Who, but she,
Knows the wild harpings of our native land?
Whether they lull the shepherd on his hill,
Or wake the knight to battle; rouse to merriment,
Or soothe to sadness; she can touch each mood.
Princes and statesmen, chiefs renown'd in arms,
And grey-hair'd bards, contend which shall the first
And choicest homage render to the enchantress.
Swi. You speak her talent bravely.
Gor. Though you smile,
I do not speak it half. Her gift creative,
New measures adds to every air she wakes;
Varying and gracing it with liquid sweetness,
Like the wild modulation of the lark;
Now leaving, now returning to the strain!
To listen to her, is to seem to wander

In some enchanted labyrinth of romance,
Whence nothing but the lovely fairy's will,
Who wove the spell, can extricate the wanderer.
Methinks I hear her now!—
Swi. Bless'd privilege
Of youth! There's scarce three minutes to decide
'Twixt death and life, 'twixt triumph and defeat,
Yet all his thoughts are in his lady's bower,
List'ning her harping!——

Enter VIPONT.

Where are thine, De Vipont?
Vip. On death—on judgment—on eternity!
For time is over with us.
Swi. There moves not, then, one pennon to our aid,
Of all that flutter yonder!
Vip. From the main English host come rushing forward
Pennons enow—ay, and their Royal Standard.
But ours stand rooted, as for crows to roost on.
Swi. [*to himself.*] I'll rescue him at least.—Young Lord of Gordon,
Spur to the Regent—show the instant need——
Gor. I penetrate thy purpose; but I go not.
Swi. Not at my bidding? I, thy sire in chivalry—
Thy leader in the battle?—I command thee.
Gor. No, thou wilt not command me seek my safety,—
For such is thy kind meaning—at the expense
Of the last hope which Heaven reserves for Scotland.
While I abide, no follower of mine
Will turn his rein for life; but were I gone,
What power can stay them? and, our band dispersed,
What swords shall for an instant stem yon host,
And save the latest chance for victory?
Vip. The noble youth speaks truth; and were he gone,
There will not twenty spears be left with us.
Gor. No, bravely as we have begun the field,
So let us fight it out. The Regent's eyes,
More certain than a thousand messages,
Shall see us stand, the barrier of his host
Against yon bursting storm. If not for honour,
If not for warlike rule, for shame at least
He must bear down to aid us.
Swi. Must it be so?
And am I forced to yield the sad consent,
Devoting thy young life? O, Gordon, Gordon!
I do it as the patriarch doom'd his issue;
I at my country's, he at Heaven's command;
But I seek vainly some atoning sacrifice,
Rather than such a victim!—[*Trumpets.*] Hark, they come!
That music sounds not like thy lady's lute.
Gor. Yet shall my lady's name mix with it gaily.—
Mount, vassals, couch your lances, and cry, "Gordon!
Gordon for Scotland and Elizabeth!"
[*Exeunt. Loud Alarms.*

SCENE III.

Another part of the Field of Battle, adjacent to the former Scene.

Alarms. Enter SWINTON, *followed by* HOB HATTELY.

Swi. Stand to it yet! The man who flies to-day,
May bastards warm them at his household hearth!
Hob. That ne'er shall be my curse. My Magdalen
Is trusty as my broadsword.
Swi. Ha, thou knave,
Art thou dismounted too?
Hob. I know, Sir Alan,
You want no homeward guide; so threw my reins
Upon my palfrey's neck, and let him loose.

Within an hour he stands before my gate;
And Magdalen will need no other token
To bid the Melrose Monks say masses for me.
Swi. Thou art resolved to cheat the halter, then?
Hob. It is my purpose,
Having lived a thief, to die a brave man's death;
And never had I a more glorious chance for't.
Swi. Here lies the way to it, knave.—Make in, make in,
And aid young Gordon!
[*Exeunt. Loud and long Alarms. After which the back Scene rises, and discovers Swinton on the ground, Gordon supporting him; both much wounded.*
Swi. All are cut down — the reapers have pass'd o'er us,
And hie to distant harvest.—My toil's over;
There lies my sickle. [*Dropping his sword.*] Hand of mine again
Shall never, never wield it!
Gor. O valiant leader, is thy light extinguish'd!
That only beacon-flame which promised safety
In this day's deadly wrack!
Swi. My lamp hath long been dim! But thine, young Gordon,
Just kindled, to be quench'd so suddenly,
Ere Scotland saw its splendour!——
Gor. Five thousand horse hung idly on yon hill,
Saw us o'erpower'd, and no one stirr'd to aid us!
Swi. It was the Regent's envy.—Out!—alas!
Why blame I him!—It was our civil discord,
Our selfish vanity, our jealous hatred,
Which framed this day of dole for our poor country.—
Had thy brave father held yon leading staff,
As well his rank and valour might have claim'd it,
We had not fall'n unaided.—How, O how
Is he to answer it, whose deed prevented——
Gor. Alas! alas! the author of the death-feud,
He has his reckoning, too! for had your sons
And num'rous vassals lived, we had lack'd no aid.
Swi. May God assoil the dead, and him who follows!
We've drank the poison'd beverage which we brew'd:
Have sown the wind, and reap'd the tenfold whirlwind!—
But thou, brave youth, whose nobleness of heart
Pour'd oil upon the wounds our hate inflicted;
Thou, who hast done no wrong, need'st no forgiveness,—
Why should'st thou share our punishment!
Gor. All need forgiveness—[*distant alarm.*]—Hark, in yonder shout
Did the main battles counter!
Swi. Look on the field, brave Gordon, if thou canst,
And tell me how the day goes.—But I guess,
Too surely do I guess——
Gor. All's lost! all's lost!—Of the main Scottish host,
Some wildly fly, and some rush wildly forward;
And some there are who seem to turn their spears
Against their countrymen.
Swi. Rashness, and cowardice, and secret treason,
Combine to ruin us; and our hot valour,
Devoid of discipline, is madmen's strength,
More fatal unto friends than enemies!
I'm glad that these dim eyes shall see no more on 't.—
Let thy hands close them, Gordon—I will dream
My fair-hair'd William renders me that office! [*Dies.*
Gor. And, Swinton, I will think I do that duty
To my dead father.

Enter De Vipont.

Vip. Fly, fly, brave youth!—A handful of thy followers,
The scatter'd gleaning of this desperate day,

Still hover yonder to essay thy rescue.—
O linger not!—I'll be your guide to them.
Gor. Look there, and bid me fly! —The oak has fall'n;
And the young ivy bush, which learn'd to climb
By its support, must needs partake its fall.
Vip. Swinton? Alas! the best, the bravest, strongest,
And sagest of our Scottish chivalry!
Forgive one moment, if to save the living,
My tongue should wrong the dead.— Gordon, bethink thee,
Thou dost but stay to perish with the corpse
Of him who slew thy father.
Gor. Ay, but he was my sire in chivalry,
He taught my youth to soar above the promptings
Of mean and selfish vengeance; gave my youth
A name that shall not die even on this death-spot.
Records shall tell this field had not been lost,
Had all men fought like Swinton and like Gordon. [*Trumpets.*
Save thee, De Vipont.—Hark! the Southron trumpets.
Vip. Nay, without thee I stir not.

Enter EDWARD, CHANDOS, PERCY, BALIOL, *etc.*

Gor. Ay, they come on—the Tyrant and the Traitor,
Workman and tool, Plantagenet and Baliol.—
O, for a moment's strength in this poor arm,
To do one glorious deed!
[*He rushes on the English, but is made prisoner with Vipont.*
K. Ed. Disarm them—harm them not; though it was they
Made havoc on the archers of our vanguard,
They and that bulky champion. Where is he?
Chan. Here lies the giant! Say his name, young Knight?
Gor. Let it suffice, he was a man this morning.
Cha. I question'd thee in sport. I do not need
Thy information, youth. Who that has fought
Through all these Scottish wars, but knows his crest,
The sable boar chain'd to the leafy oak,
And that huge mace still seen where war was wildest!
King Ed. 'Tis Alan Swinton!
Grim chamberlain, who in my tent at Weardale,
Stood by my startled couch with torch and mace,
When the Black Douglas' war-cry waked my camp.
Gor. [*sinking down.*] If thus thou know'st him,
Thou wilt respect his corpse.
K. Ed. As belted Knight and crowned King, I will.
Gor. And let mine
Sleep at his side, in token that our death
Ended the feud of Swinton and of Gordon.
K. Ed. It is the Gordon!—Is there aught beside
Edward can do to honour bravely,
Even in an enemy?
Gor. Nothing but this:
Let not base Baliol, with his touch or look,
Profane my corpse or Swinton's. I've some breath still,
Enough to say—Scotland—Elizabeth! [*Dies.*
Cha. Baliol, I would not brook such dying looks,
To buy the crown you aim at.
K. Ed. [*to Vip.*] Vipont, thy crossed shield shows ill in warfare
Against a Christian king.
Vip. That Christian King is warring upon Scotland.
I was a Scotsman ere I was a Templar,
Sworn to my country ere I knew my Order.
K. Ed. I will but know thee as a Christian champion,
And set thee free unransom'd.

Enter ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.

Ab. Heaven grant your Majesty
Many such glorious days as this has been!

K. Ed. It is a day of much and high advantage;
Glorious it might have been, had all our foes
Fought like these two brave champions.—Strike the drums,
Sound trumpets, and pursue the fugitives,
Till the Tweed's eddies whelm them. Berwick's render'd—
These wars, I trust, will soon find lasting close.

MACDUFF'S CROSS[1]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Ninian, Waldhave, } *Monks of Lindores.*
Lindesay, Maurice Berkeley, } *Scottish Barons.*

PRELUDE

Nay, smile not, Lady, when I speak of witchcraft,
And say, that still there lurks among our glens
Some touch of strange enchantment. —Mark that fragment,
I mean that rough-hewn block of massive stone,
Placed on the summit of this mountain-pass,
Commanding prospect wide o'er field and fell,
And peopled village and extended moorland,
And the wide ocean and majestic Tay,
To the far distant Grampians.—Do not deem it
A loosen'd portion of the neighbouring rock,
Detach'd by storm and thunder,—'twas the pedestal
On which, in ancient times, a Cross was rear'd,
Carved o'er with words which foil'd philologists;
And the events it did commemorate
Were dark, remote, and undistinguishable,
As were the mystic characters it bore.
But, mark,—a wizard, born on Avon's bank,
Tuned but his harp to this wild northern theme,
And, lo! the scene is hallow'd. None shall pass,
Now, or in after days, beside that stone,
But he shall have strange visions; thoughts and words.
That shake, or rouse, or thrill the human heart,
Shall rush upon his memory when he hears
The spirit-stirring name of this rude symbol;—
Oblivious ages, at that simple spell,
Shall render back their terrors with their woes,
Alas! and with their crimes—and the proud phantoms
Shall move with step familiar to his eye,
And accents which, once heard, the ear forgets not,
Though ne'er again to list them. Siddons, thine,
Thou matchless Siddons! thrill upon our ear;
And on our eye thy lofty Brother's form
Rises as Scotland's monarch.—But, to thee,
Joanna, why to thee speak of such visions?
Thine own wild wand can raise them.

Yet since thou wilt an idle tale of mine,
Take one which scarcely is of worth enough
To give or to withhold.—Our time creeps on,
Fancy grows colder as the silvery hair
Tells the advancing winter of our life.
But if it be of worth enough to please,
That worth it owes to her who set the task;
If otherwise, the fault rests with the author.

[1] Dedicated to Mrs. Joanna Baillie, authoress of "The Plays of the Passions."

SCENE I.

The summit of a Rocky Pass near to Newburgh, about two miles from the ancient Abbey of Lindores, in Fife. In the centre is Macduff's Cross, an antique Monument; and, at a small distance, on one side, a Chapel, with a Lamp burning.

Enter, as having ascended the Pass, NINIAN *and* WALDHAVE, *Monks of Lindores.* NINIAN *crosses himself, and seems to recite his devotions.* WALDHAVE *stands gazing on the prospect, as if in deep contemplation.*

Nin. Here stands the Cross, good brother, consecrated
By the bold Thane unto his patron saint
Magridius, once a brother of our house.
Canst thou not spare an ave or a creed?
Or hath the steep ascent exhausted you?
You trod it stoutly, though 'twas rough and toilsome.
Wal. I have trode a rougher.
Nin. On the Highland hills—
Scarcely within our sea-girt province here,
Unless upon the Lomonds or Bennarty.
Wal. I spoke not of the literal path, good father,
But of the road of life which I have travell'd,
Ere I assumed this habit; it was bounded,
Hedged in, and limited by earthly prospects,
As ours beneath was closed by dell and thicket.
Here we see wide and far, and the broad sky,
With wide horizon, opens full around,
While earthly objects dwindle. Brother Ninian,
Fain would I hope that mental elevation
Could raise me equally o'er worldly thoughts,
And place me nearer heaven.
Nin. 'Tis good morality.—But yet forget not,
That though we look on heaven from this high eminence,
Yet doth the Prince of all the airy space,
Arch foe of man, possess the realms between.
Wal. Most true, good brother; and men may be farther
From the bright heaven they aim at, even because
They deem themselves secure on 't.
Nin. [*after a pause.*] You do gaze—
Strangers are wont to do so—on the prospect.
Yon is the Tay roll'd down from Highland hills,
That rests his waves, after so rude a race,
In the fair plains of Gowrie—further westward,
Proud Stirling rises—yonder to the east,
Dundee, the gift of God, and fair Montrose,
And still more northward lie the ancient towers——
Wal. Of Edzell.
Nin. How? know you the towers of Edzell?
Wal. I've heard of them.
Nin. Then have you heard a tale,
Which when he tells, the peasant shakes his head,
And shuns the mouldering and deserted walls.
Wal. Why, and by whom, deserted?
Nin. Long the tale—
Enough to say that the last Lord of Edzell,
Bold Louis Lindesay, had a wife, and found——
Wal. Enough is said, indeed—since a weak woman,
Ay, and a tempting fiend, lost Paradise,
When was man innocent.
Nin. They fell at strife,
Men say, on slight occasion: that fierce Lindesay
Did bend his sword against De Berkeley's breast,
And that the lady threw herself between:
That then De Berkeley dealt the Baron's death-wound.
Enough, that from that time De Berkeley bore

A spear in foreign wars. But, it is said,
He hath return'd of late; and, therefore, brother,
The Prior hath ordain'd our vigil here,
To watch the privilege of the sanctuary,
And rights of Clan MacDuff.
Wal. What rights are these?
Nin. Most true! you are but newly come from Rome,
And do not know our ancient usages.
Know then, when fell Macbeth beneath the arm
Of the predestined knight, unborn of woman,
Three boons the victor ask'd, and thrice did Malcolm,
Stooping the sceptre by the Thane restored,
Assent to his request. And hence the rule,
That first when Scotland's King assumes the crown,
MacDuff's descendant rings his brow with it;
And hence, when Scotland's King calls forth his host,
MacDuff's descendant leads the van in battle:
And last, in guerdon of the crown restored,
Red with the blood of the usurping tyrant,
The right was granted in succeeding time,
That if a kinsman of the Thane of Fife
Commit a slaughter on a sudden impulse,
And fly for refuge to this Cross MacDuff,
For the Thane's sake he shall find sanctuary;
For here must the avenger's step be staid,
And here the panting homicide find safety.
Wal. And here a brother of your order watches,
To see the custom of the place observed?
Nin. Even so;—such is our convent's holy right,
Since Saint Magridius—blessed be his memory!—
Did by a vision warn the Abbot Eadmir.—
And chief we watch, when there is bickering
Among the neighbouring nobles, now most likely
From this return of Berkeley from abroad,
Having the Lindesay's blood upon his hand.
Wal. The Lindesay, then, was loved among his friends?
Nin. Honour'd and fear'd he was —but little loved;
For even his bounty bore a show of sternness;
And when his passions waked, he was a Sathan
Of wrath and injury.
Wal. How now, Sir Priest! *[fiercely]*—Forgive me *[recollecting himself]*—I was dreaming
Of an old baron, who did bear about him
Some touch of your Lord Reynold.
Nin. Lindesay's name, my brother,
Indeed was Reynold;—and methinks, moreover,
That, as you spoke even now, he would have spoken.
I brought him a petition from our convent:
He granted straight, but in such tone and manner,
By my good saint! I thought myself scarce safe
Till Tay roll'd broad between us. I must now
Unto the chapel—meanwhile the watch is thine;
And, at thy word, the hurrying fugitive,
Should such arrive, must find here sanctuary;
And, at thy word, the fiery-paced avenger
Must stop his bloody course—e'en as swoln Jordan
Controll'd his waves, soon as they touch'd the feet
Of those who bore the ark.
Wal. Is this my charge?
Nin. Even so; and I am near, should chance require me.
At midnight I relieve you on your watch,
When we may taste together some refreshment:

I have cared for it; and for a flask of wine—
There is no sin, so that we drink it not
Until the midnight hour, when lauds have toll'd.
Farewell a while, and peaceful watch be with you!
[*Exit towards the Chapel.*
Wal. It is not with me, and alas! alas!
I know not where to seek it. This monk's mind
Is with his cloister match'd, nor lacks more room.
Its petty duties, formal ritual,
Its humble pleasures and its paltry troubles,
Fill up his round of life; even as some reptiles,
They say, are moulded to the very shape,
And all the angles of the rocky crevice,
In which they live and die. But for myself,
Retired in passion to the narrow cell,
Couching my tired limbs in its recesses,
So ill-adapted am I to its limits,
That very attitude is agony.——
How now! what brings him back?

Re-enter NINIAN.

Nin. Look to your watch, my brother; horsemen come:
I heard their tread when kneeling in the chapel.
Wal. [*looking to a distance.*] My thoughts have rapt me more than my devotion,
Else had I heard the tread of distant horses
Farther than thou couldst hear the sacring bell;
But now in truth they come:—flight and pursuit
Are sights I've been long strange to.
Nin. See how they gallop down the opposing hill!
Yon grey steed bounding down the headlong path,
As on the level meadow; while the black,
Urged by the rider with his naked sword,
Stoops on his prey, as I have seen the falcon
Dashing upon the heron.—Thou dost frown
And clench thy hand, as if it grasp'd a weapon?
Wal. 'Tis but for shame to see a man fly thus
While only one pursues him. Coward, turn!—
Turn thee, I say! thou art as stout as he,
And well mayst match thy single sword with his—
Shame, that a man should rein a steed like thee,
Yet fear to turn his front against a foe!—
I am ashamed to look on them.
Nin. Yet look again; they quit their horses now,
Unfit for the rough path: the fugitive
Keeps the advantage still.—They strain towards us.
Wal. I'll not believe that ever the bold Thane
Rear'd up his Cross to be a sanctuary
To the base coward, who shunn'd an equal combat.—
How's this?—that look—that mien—mine eyes grow dizzy!—
Nin. He comes!—thou art a novice on this watch,—
Brother, I'll take the word and speak to him.
Pluck down thy cowl; know, that we spiritual champions
Have honour to maintain, and must not seem
To quail before the laity.
[*Waldhave lets down his cowl, and steps back.*
Enter MAURICE BERKELEY.
Nin. Who art thou, stranger? speak thy name and purpose.
Ber. I claim the privilege of Clan MacDuff.
My name is Maurice Berkeley, and my lineage
Allies me nearly with the Thane of Fife.
Nin. Give us to know the cause of sanctuary?
Ber. Let him show it,
Against whose violence I claim the privilege.
Enter LINDESAY, *with his sword drawn. He rushes at* BERKELEY; NINIAN *interposes.*
Nin. Peace, in the name of Saint Magridius!
Peace, in our Prior's name, and in the name

Of that dear symbol, which did purchase peace
And good-will towards man! I do command thee
To sheath thy sword, and stir no contest here.
Lin. One charm I'll try first,
To lure the craven from the enchanted circle
Which he hath harbour'd in.—Hear you, De Berkeley,
This is my brother's sword—the hand it arms
Is weapon'd to avenge a brother's death:—
If thou hast heart to step a furlong off,
And change three blows,—even for so short a space
As these good men may say an ave-marie,—
So, Heaven be good to me! I will forgive thee
Thy deed and all its consequences.
Ber. Were not my right hand fetter'd by the thought
That slaying thee were but a double guilt
In which to steep my soul, no bridegroom ever
Stepp'd forth to trip a measure with his bride
More joyfully than I, young man, would rush
To meet thy challenge.
Lin. He quails, and shuns to look upon my weapon,
Yet boasts himself a Berkeley!
Ber. Lindesay, and if there were no deeper cause
For shunning thee than terror of thy weapon,
That rock-hewn Cross as soon should start and stir,
Because a shepherd-boy blew horn beneath it,
As I for brag of thine.
Nin. I charge you both, and in the name of Heaven,
Breathe no defiance on this sacred spot,
Where Christian men must bear them peacefully.
On pain of the Church thunders. Calmly tell
Your cause of difference; and, Lord Lindesay, thou
Be first to speak them.
Lin. Ask the blue welkin—ask the silver Tay,
The northern Grampians—all things know my wrongs;
But ask not me to tell them, while the villain,
Who wrought them, stands and listens with a smile.
Nin. It is said—
Since you refer us thus to general fame—
That Berkeley slew thy brother, the Lord Louis,
In his own halls at Edzell——
Lin. Ay, in his halls—
In his own halls, good father, that's the word.
In his own halls he slew him, while the wine
Pass'd on the board between! The gallant Thane,
Who wreak'd Macbeth's inhospitable murder,
Rear'd not yon Cross to sanction deeds like these.
Ber. Thou say'st I came a guest! —I came a victim,
A destined victim, train'd on to the doom
His frantic jealousy prepared for me.
He fix'd a quarrel on me, and we fought.
Can I forget the form that came between us,
And perish'd by his sword? 'Twas then I fought
For vengeance, — until then I guarded life,
But then I sought to take it, and prevail'd.
Lin. Wretch! thou didst first dishonour to thy victim,
And then didst slay him!
Ber. There is a busy fiend tugs at my heart,
But I will struggle with it!—Youthful knight,
My heart is sick of war, my hand of slaughter;
I come not to my lordships, or my land,
But just to seek a spot in some cold cloister,
Which I may kneel on living, and, when dead,
Which may suffice to cover me.
Forgive me that I caused your brother's death;
And I forgive thee the injurious terms
With which thou taxest me.

Lin. Take worse and blacker.—
Murderer, adulterer!—
Art thou not moved yet?
Ber. Do not press me further.
The hunted stag, even when he
seeks the thicket,
Compell'd to stand at bay, grows
dangerous!
Most true thy brother perish'd by
my hand,
And if you term it murder—I must
bear it.
Thus far my patience can; but if
thou brand
The purity of yonder martyr'd saint,
Whom then my sword but poorly
did avenge,
With one injurious word, come to
the valley,
And I will show thee how it shall
be answer'd?
Nin. This heat, Lord Berkeley,
doth but ill accord
With thy late pious patience.
Ber. Father, forgive, and let me
stand excused
To Heaven and thee, if patience
brooks no more.
I loved this lady fondly—truly
loved—
Loved her, and was beloved, ere yet
her father
Conferr'd her on another. While
she lived,
Each thought of her was to my soul
as hallow'd
As those I send to Heaven; and on
her grave,
Her bloody, early grave, while this
poor hand
Can hold a sword, shall no one cast
a scorn.
Lin. Follow me. Thou shalt hear
me call the adulteress
By her right name.—I'm glad there's
yet a spur
Can rouse thy sluggard mettle.
Ber. Make then obeisance to the
blessed Cross,
For it shall be on earth thy last
devotion. [*They are going off.*
Wal. [*rushing forward.*] Madmen,
stand!—
Stay but one second—answer but
one question.—
There, Maurice Berkeley, can'st thou
look upon
That blessed sign, and swear thou'st
spoken truth?
Ber. I swear by Heaven,
And by the memory of that murder'd
innocent,
Each seeming charge against her
was as false
As our bless'd Lady's spotless.
Hear, each saint!
Hear me, thou holy rood! hear me
from heaven,
Thou martyr'd excellence!—Hear
me from penal fire,
(For sure not yet thy guilt is ex-
piated!)
Stern ghost of her destroyer!——
Wal. [*throws back his cowl.*] He
hears! he hears! Thy spell
hath raised the dead.
Lin. My brother! and alive!—
Wal. Alive,—but yet, my Richard,
dead to thee,
No tie of kindred binds me to the
world;
All were renounced, when, with
reviving life,
Came the desire to seek the sacred
cloister.
Alas, in vain! for to that last re-
treat,
Like to a pack of bloodhounds in
full chase,
My passion and my wrongs have
follow'd me,
Wrath and remorse—and, to fill up
the cry,
Thou hast brought vengeance hither.
Lin. I but sought
To do the act and duty of a brother.
Wal. I ceased to be so when I left
the world;
But if he can forgive as I forgive,
God sends me here a brother in mine
enemy,
To pray for me and with me. If
thou canst,
De Berkeley, give thine hand.—
Ber. [*gives his hand.*] It is the will
Of Heaven, made manifest in thy
preservation,
To inhibit farther bloodshed; for
De Berkeley,
The votary Maurice lays the title
down.
Go to his halls, Lord Richard, where
a maiden,
Kin to his blood, and daughter in
affection,
Heirs his broad lands;—If thou canst
love her, Lindesay,
Woo her, and be successful.

THE DOOM OF DEVORGOIL

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Oswald of Devorgoil, *a decayed Scottish Baron.*
Leonard, *a Ranger.*
Durward, *a Palmer.*
Lancelot Blackthorn, *a Companion of Leonard, in love with Katleen.*
Gullcrammer, *a conceited Student.*

Owlspiegle and Cockledemoy, *Maskers, represented by Blackthorn and Katleen.*

Spirit of Lord Erick of Devorgoil.
Peasants, Shepherds, and Vassals of inferior rank.

Eleanor, *Wife of Oswald, descended of obscure Parentage.*
Flora, *Daughter of Oswald.*
Katleen, *Niece of Eleanor.*

ACT I.—Scene I.

The Scene represents a wild and hilly, but not a mountainous Country, in a frontier District of Scotland. The flat Scene exhibits the Castle of Devorgoil, decayed, and partly ruinous, situated upon a Lake, and connected with the Land by a Drawbridge, which is lowered. Time—Sunset.

Flora *enters from the Castle, looks timidly around, then comes forward and speaks.*

He is not here—those pleasures are not ours
Which placid evening brings to all things else.

SONG

The sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.
Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.
The noble dame, on turret high,
Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
The flash of armour bright.
The village maid, with hand on brow
The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans row,
By day they swam apart,
And to the thicket wanders slow
The hind beside the hart.
The woodlark at his partner's side,
Twitters his closing song—
All meet whom day and care divide,
But Leonard tarries long.

[*Katleen has come out of the Castle while Flora was singing, and speaks when the Song is ended.*

Kat. Ah, my dear coz!—if that your mother's niece
May so presume to call your father's daughter—
All these fond things have got some home of comfort
To tempt their rovers back—the lady's bower,
The shepherdess's hut, the wild swan's couch
Among the rushes, even the lark's low nest,
Has that of promise which lures home a lover,—
But we have nought of this.
Flo. How call you, then, this castle of my sire,
The towers of Devorgoil?
Kat. Dungeons for men, and palaces for owls;
Yet no wise owl would change a farmer's barn
For yonder hungry hall—our latest mouse,
Our last of mice, I tell you, has been found
Starved in the pantry; and the reverend spider,
Sole living tenant of the Baron's halls,
Who, train'd to abstinence, lived a whole summer

Upon a single fly, he's famish'd too;
The cat is in the kitchen-chimney seated
Upon our last of fagots, destined soon
To dress our last of suppers, and, poor soul,
Is starved with cold, and mewling mad with hunger.
Flo. D'ye mock our misery, Katleen?
Kat. No, but I am hysteric on the subject,
So I must laugh or cry, and laughing's lightest.
Flo. Why stay you with us, then, my merry cousin?
From you my sire can ask no filial duty.
Kat. No, thanks to Heaven!
No noble in wide Scotland, rich or poor,
Can claim an interest in the vulgar blood
That dances in my veins; and I might wed
A forester to-morrow, nothing fearing
The wrath of high-born kindred, and far less
That the dry bones of lead-lapp'd ancestors
Would clatter in their cerements at the tidings.
Flo. My mother, too, would gladly see you placed
Beyond the verge of our unhappiness,
Which, like a witch's circle, blights and taints
Whatever comes within it.
Kat. Ah! my good aunt!
She is a careful kinswoman and prudent,
In all but marrying a ruin'd baron,
When she could take her choice of honest yeomen;
And now, to balance this ambitious error,
She presses on her daughter's love the suit
Of one, who hath no touch of nobleness,
In manners, birth, or mind, to recommend him,—
Sage Master Gullcrammer, the new-dubb'd preacher.
Flo. Do not name him, Katleen!
Kat. Ay, but I must, and with some gratitude.
I said but now, I saw our last of fagots
Destined to dress our last of meals, but said not
That the repast consisted of choice dainties,
Sent to our larder by that liberal suitor,
The kind Melchisedek.
Flo. Were famishing the word,
I'd famish ere I tasted them—the fop,
The fool, the low-born, low-bred, pedant coxcomb!
Kat. There spoke the blood of long-descended sires!
My cottage wisdom ought to echo back,—
O the snug parsonage! the well-paid stipend!
The yew-hedged garden! beehives, pigs, and poultry!
But, to speak honestly, the pleasant Katleen,
Valuing these good things justly, still would scorn
To wed, for such, the paltry Gullcrammer,
As much as Lady Flora.
Flo. Mock me not with a title, gentle cousin,
Which poverty has made ridiculous.— [*Trumpets far off.*
Hark! they have broken up the weapon-shawing;
The vassals are dismiss'd, and marching homeward.
Kat. Comes your sire back to-night?
Flo. He did purpose
To tarry for the banquet. This day only,
Summon'd as a king's tenant, he resumes
The right of rank his birth assigns to him,
And mingles with the proudest.
Kat. To return
To his domestic wretchedness to-morrow—
I envy not the privilege. Let us go
To yonder height, and see the marksmen practise;
They shoot their match down in the dale beyond,
Betwixt the Lowland and the Forest district,
By ancient custom, for a tun of wine.
Let us go see which wins.
Flo. That were too forward.

Kat. Why, you may drop the screen before your face,
Which some chance breeze may haply blow aside
Just when a youth of special note takes aim.
It chanced even so that memorable morning,
When, nutting in the woods, we met young Leonard;—
And in good time here comes his sturdy comrade,
The rough Lance Blackthorn.

Enter LANCELOT BLACKTHORN, *a Forester, with the Carcass of a Deer on his back, and a Gun in his hand.*

Bla. Save you, damsels!
Kat. Godden, good yeoman,—Come you from the Weaponshaw?
Bla. Not I, indeed; there lies the mark I shot at.
[*Lays down the Deer.*
The time has been I had not miss'd the sport,
Although Lord Nithsdale's self had wanted vension;
But this same mate of mine, young Leonard Dacre,
Makes me do what he lists;—he'll win the prize, though;
The Forest district will not lose its honour,
And that is all I care for—[*some shouts are heard.*] Hark! they're at it.
I'll go see the issue.
Flo. Leave not here
The produce of your hunting.
Bla. But I must, though.
This is his lair to-night, for Leonard Dacre
Charged me to leave the stag at Devorgoil;
Then show me quickly where to stow the quarry,
And let me to the sports—[*more shots.*] Come, hasten, damsels!
Flo. It is impossible—we dare not take it.
Bla. There let it lie, then, and I'll wind my bugle,
That all within these tottering walls may know
That here lies venison, whoso likes to lift it. [*About to blow.*
Kat. [*to Flo.*] He will alarm your mother; and, besides,
Our Forest proverb teaches, that no question
Should ask where vension comes from.
Your careful mother, with her wonted prudence,
Will hold its presence plead its own apology.—
Come, Blackthorn, I will show you where to stow it.
[*Exeunt Katleen and Blackthorn into the Castle—more shooting—then a distant shout—Stragglers, armed in different ways, pass over the Stage, as if from the Weaponshaw.*
Flo. The prize is won; that general shout proclaim'd it.
The marksmen and the vassals are dispersing. [*She draws back.*
First Vassal [*a peasant.*] Ay, ay,—'tis lost and won,—the Forest have it.
'Tis they have all the luck on't.
Second Vas. [*a shepherd.*] Luck, sayst thou, man? 'Tis practice, skill, and cunning.
Third Vas. 'Tis no such thing.—I had hit the mark precisely,
But for this cursed flint; and, as I fired,
A swallow cross'd mine eye too—Will you tell me
That that was but a chance, mine honest shepherd?
First Vas. Ay, and last year, when Lancelot Blackthorn won it,
Because my powder happen'd to be damp,
Was there no luck in that?—The worse luck mine.
Second Vas. Still I say 'twas not chance; it might be witchcraft.
First Vas. Faith, not unlikely, neighbours; for these foresters
Do often haunt about this ruin'd castle.
I've seen myself this spark,—young Leonard Dacre,—
Come stealing like a ghost ere break of day,
And after sunset, too, along this path;
And well you know the haunted towers of Devorgoil
Have no good reputation in the land.

Shep. That have they not. I've heard my father say,—
Ghosts dance as lightly in its moonlight halls,
As ever maiden did at Midsummer
Upon the village-green.
First Vas. Those that frequent such spirit-haunted ruins
Must needs know more than simple Christians do.—
See, Lance this blessed moment leaves the castle,
And comes to triumph o'er us.
[*Blackthorn enters from the Castle, and comes forward while they speak.*
Third Vas. A mighty triumph! What is 't, after all,
Except the driving of a piece of lead,
As learned Master Gullcrammer defined it,—
Just through the middle of a painted board,
Black. And if he so define it, by your leave,
Your learned Master Gullcrammer's an ass.
Third Vas. [*angrily.*] He is a preacher, huntsman, under favour.
Second Vas. No quarrelling, neighbours—you may both be right.
Enter a FOURTH VASSAL, *with a gallon stoup of wine.*
Fourth Vas. Why stand you brawling here? Young Leonard Dacre
Has set abroach the tun of wine he gain'd,
That all may drink who list. Blackthorn, I sought you;
Your comrade prays you will bestow this flagon
Where you have left the deer you kill'd this morning
Black. And that I will; but first we will take toll
To see if it's worth carriage. Shepherd, thy horn.
There must be due allowance made for leakage,
And that will come about a draught a-piece.
Skink it about, and, when our throats are liquor'd,
We'll merrily trowl our song of weaponshaw.
[*They drink about out of the Shepherd's horn, and then sing.*

SONG

We love the shrill trumpet, we love the drum's rattle,
They call us to sport, and they call us to battle;
And old Scotland shall laugh at the threats of a stranger,
While our comrades in pastime are comrades in danger.

If there's mirth in our house, 'tis our neighbour that shares it—
If peril approach, 'tis our neighbour that dares it;
And when we lead off to the pipe and the tabor,
The fair hand we press is the hand of a neighbour.

Then close your ranks, comrades, the bands that combine them,
Faith, friendship, and brotherhood, join'd to entwine them;
And we'll laugh at the threats of each insolent stranger,
While our comrades in sport are our comrades in danger.

Black. Well, I must do mine errand. Master flagon
[*Shaking it.*
Is too consumptive for another bleeding.
Shep. I must to my fold.
Third Vas. I'll to the butt of wine,
And see if that has given up the ghost yet.
First Vas. Have with you, neighbour.
[*Blackthorn enters the Castle, the rest exeunt severally. Melchisedek Gullcrammer watches them off the stage, and then enters from the side-scene. His costume is a Geneva cloak and band, with a high-crowned hat; the rest of his dress in the fashion of James the First's time. He looks to the windows of the Castle, then draws back as if to escape observation, while he brushes his cloak, drives the white threads from his waistcoat with his wetted thumb, and dusts his shoes, all with the air of one who would not willingly be observed engaged in these offices. He then adjusts his collar and band, comes forward and speaks.*

Gull. Right comely is thy garb, Melchisedek;
As well beseemeth one, whom good Saint Mungo,
The patron of our land and university,
Hath graced with license both to teach and preach—
Who dare opine thou hither plod'st on foot?
Trim sits thy cloak, unruffled is thy band,
And not a speck upon thine outward man,
Bewrays the labours of thy weary sole.
[*Touches his shoe, and smiles complacently.*
Quaint was that jest and pleasant!—Now will I
Approach and hail the dwellers of this fort;
But specially sweet Flora Devorgoil,
Ere her proud sire return. He loves me not,
Mocketh my lineage, flouts at mine advancement—
Sour as the fruit the crab-tree furnishes,
And hard as is the cudgel it supplies;
But Flora—she's a lily on the lake,
And I must reach her, though I risk a ducking.
[*As Gullcrammer moves towards the drawbridge; Bauldie Durward enters, and interposes himself betwixt him and the Castle. Gullcrammer stops and speaks.*
Whom have we here?—that ancient fortune-teller,
Papist and sorcerer, and sturdy beggar,
Old Bauldie Durward! Would I were well past him!
[*Durward advances, partly in the dress of a palmer, partly in that of an old Scottish mendicant, having coarse blue cloak and badge, white beard, etc.*
Dur. The blessing of the evening on your worship,
And on your taff'ty doublet. Much I marvel
Your wisdom chooseth such trim garb, when tempests
Are gathering to the bursting.
Gullcrammer [*looks to his dress, and then to the sky, with some apprehension.*]
Surely, Bauldie,
Thou dost belie the evening—in the west
The light sinks down as lovely as this band
Drops o'er this mantle—Tush, man! 'twill be fair.
Dur. Ay, but the storm I bode is big with blows,
Horsewhips for hailstones, clubs for thunderbolts;
And for the wailing of the midnight wind,
The unpitied howling of a cudgell'd coxcomb.
Come, come, I know thou seek'st fair Flora Devorgoil.
Gul. And if I did, I do the damsel grace.
Her mother thinks so, and she has accepted
At these poor hands gifts of some consequence,
And curious dainties for the evening cheer,
To which I am invited—She respects me.
Dur. But not so doth her father, haughty Oswald.
Bethink thee, he's a baron——
Gul. And a bare one;
Construe me that, old man!—The crofts of Mucklewhame—
Destined for mine so soon as heaven and earth
Have shared my uncle's soul and bones between them—
The crofts of Mucklewhame, old man, which nourish
Three scores of sheep, three cows, with each her follower,
A female palfrey eke—I will be candid,
She is of that meek tribe whom, in derison,
Our wealthy southern neighbours nickname donkeys——
Dur. She hath her follower too,—when thou art there.
Gul. I say to thee, these crofts of Mucklewhame,
In the mere tything of their stock and produce,
Outvie whatever patch of land remains
To this old rugged castle and its owner.

Well, therefore, may Melchisedek Gullcrammer,
Younger of Mucklewhame, for such I write me,
Master of Arts, by grace of good Saint Andrew,
Preacher, in brief expectance of a kirk,
Endow'd with ten score Scottish pounds per annum,
Being eight pounds seventeen eight in sterling coin—
Well then, I say, may this Melchisedek,
Thus highly graced by fortune—and by nature
E'en gifted as thou seest—aspire to woo
The daughter of the beggar'd Devorgoil.
Dur. Credit an old man's word, kind Master Gullcrammer,
You will not find it so.—Come, sir, I've known
The hospitality of Mucklewhame;
It reach'd not to profuseness—yet, in gratitude
For the pure water of its living well,
And for the barley loaves of its fair fields,
Wherein chopp'd straw contended with the grain
Which best should satisfy the appetite,
I would not see the hopeful heir of Mucklewhame
Thus fling himself on danger.
Gul. Danger! what danger?—Know'st thou not, old Oswald
This day attends the muster of the shire,
Where the crown-vassals meet to show their arms,
And their best horse of service?—'Twas good sport
(An if a man had dared but laugh at it)
To see old Oswald with his rusty morion,
And huge two-handed sword, that might have seen
The field of Bannockburn or Chevy-Chase,
Without a squire or vassal, page or groom,
Or e'en a single pikeman at his heels,
Mix with the proudest nobles of the county,
And claim precedence for his tatter'd person
O'er armours double gilt and ostrich plumage.
Dur. Ay! 'twas the jest at which fools laugh the loudest,
The downfall of our old nobility—
Which may forerun the ruin of a kingdom.
I've seen an idiot clap his hands, and shout
To see a tower like yon [*points to a part of the Castle*] stoop to its base
In headlong ruin; while the wise look'd round,
And fearful sought a distant stance to watch
What fragment of the fabric next should follow;
For when the turrets fall, the walls are tottering.
Gul. [*after pondering.*] If that means aught, it means thou saw'st old Oswald
Expell'd from the assembly.
Dur. Thy sharp wit
Hath glanced unwittingly right nigh the truth.
Expell'd he was not, but, his claim denied
At some contested point of ceremony,
He left the weaponshaw in high displeasure,
And hither comes—his wonted bitter temper
Scarce sweeten'd by the chances of the day.
'Twere much like rashness should you wait his coming,
And thither tends my counsel.
Gul. And I'll take it;
Good Bauldie Durward, I will take thy counsel,
And will requite it with this minted farthing,
That bears our sovereign's head in purest copper.
Dur. Thanks to thy bounty—Haste thee, good young master;
Oswald, besides the old two-handed sword,
Bears in his hand a staff of potency,
To charm intruders from his castle purlieus.
Gul. I do abhor all charms, nor will abide
To hear or see, far less to feel their use.

Behold, I have departed.
[*Exit hastily.*

Manent DURWARD.

Dur. Thus do I play the idle part of one
Who seeks to save the moth from scorching him
In the bright taper's flame—And Flora's beauty
Must, not unlike that taper, waste away,
Gilding the rugged walls that saw it kindled.
This was a shard-born beetle, heavy, drossy,
Though boasting his dull drone and gilded wing.
Here comes a flutterer of another stamp,
Whom the same ray is charming to his ruin.

Enter LEONARD, *dressed as a huntsman; he pauses before the Tower, and whistles a note or two at intervals—drawing back, as if fearful of observation—yet waiting, as if expecting some reply.* DURWARD, *whom he had not observed, moves round, so as to front* LEONARD *unexpectedly.*

Leon. I am too late—it was no easy task
To rid myself from yonder noisy revellers.
Flora!—I fear she's angry—Flora—Flora!

SONG

Admire not that I gain'd the prize
From all the village crew;
How could I fail with hand or eyes,
When heart and faith were true?

And when in floods of rosy wine
My comrades drown'd their cares,
I thought but that thy heart was mine,
My own leapt light as theirs.

My brief delay then do not blame,
Nor deem your swain untrue;
My form but linger'd at the game,
My soul was still with you.

She hears not!
Dur. But a friend hath heard—Leonard, I pity thee.

Leon. [*starts, but recovers himself.*] Pity, good father, is for those in want,
In age, in sorrow, in distress of mind,
Or agony of body.—I'm in health—
Can match my limbs against the stag in chase,
Have means enough to meet my simple wants,
And am so free of soul that I can carol
To woodland and to wild in notes as lively
As are my jolly bugle's.
Dur. Even therefore dost thou need my pity, Leonard,
And therefore I bestow it, praying thee,
Before thou feel'st the need, my mite of pity.
Leonard, thou lovest; and in that little word
There lies enough to claim the sympathy
Of men who wear such hoary locks as mine,
And know what misplaced love is sure to end in.
Leon. Good father, thou art old, and even thy youth,
As thou hast told me, spent in cloister'd cells,
Fits thee but ill to judge the passions
Which are the joy and charm of social life.
Press me no farther, then, nor waste those moments
Whose worth thou canst not estimate. [*As turning from him.*
Dur. [*detains him.*] Stay, young man!
'Tis seldom that a beggar claims a debt;
Yet I bethink me of a gay young stripling,
That owes to these white locks and hoary beard
Something of reverence and of gratitude
More than he wills to pay.
Leon. Forgive me, father. Often hast thou told me,
That in the ruin of my father's house
You saved the orphan Leonard in his cradle;
And well I know, that to thy care alone—
Care seconded by means beyond thy seeming—

I owe whate'er of nurture I can boast.
Dur. Then for thy life preserved,
And for the means of knowledge I have furnish'd,
(Which lacking, man is levell'd with the brutes,)
Grant me this boon:—Avoid these fatal walls!
A curse is on them, bitter, deep, and heavy,
Of power to split the massiest tower they boast
From pinnacle to dungeon vault. It rose
Upon the gay horizon of proud Devorgoil,
As unregarded as the fleecy cloud,
The first forerunner of the hurricane,
Scarce seen amid the welkin's shadeless blue.
Dark grew it, and more dark, and still the fortunes
Of this doom'd family have darken'd with it.
It hid their sovereign's favour, and obscured
The lustre of their service, gender'd hate
Betwixt them and the mighty of the land;
Till by degrees the waxing tempest rose,
And stripp'd the goodly tree of fruit and flowers,
And buds, and boughs, and branches. There remains
A rugged trunk, dismember'd and unsightly,
Waiting the bursting of the final bolt
To splinter it to shivers. Now, go pluck
Its single tendril to enwreath thy brow,
And rest beneath its shade—to share the ruin!
Leon. This anathema,
Whence should it come?—How merited!—and when?
Dur. 'Twas in the days
Of Oswald's grandsire,—'mid Galwegian chiefs
The fellest foe, the fiercest champion.
His blood-red pennons scared the Cambrian coasts,
And wasted towns and manors mark'd his progress.
His galleys stored with treasure, and their decks
Crowded with English captives, who beheld,
With weeping eyes, their native shores retire,
He bore him homeward; but a tempest rose——
Leon. So far I've heard the tale,
And spare thee the recital,—The grim chief,
Marking his vessels labour on the sea,
And loth to lose his treasure, gave command
To plunge his captives in the raging deep.
Dur. There sunk the lineage of a noble name,
And the wild waves boom'd over sire and son,
Mother and nursling, of the House of Aglionby,
Leaving but one frail tendril.—Hence the fate
That hovers o'er these turrets,—hence the peasant,
Belated, hying homewards, dreads to cast
A glance upon that portal, lest he see
The unshrouded spectres of the murder'd dead;
Or the avenging Angel, with his sword,
Waving destruction; or the grisly phantom
Of that fell Chief, the doer of the deed,
Which still, they say, roams through his empty halls,
And mourns their wasteness and their lonelihood.
Leon. Such is the dotage
Of superstition, father, ay, and the cant
Of hoodwink'd prejudice.—Not for atonement
Of some foul deed done in the ancient warfare,
When war was butchery, and men were wolves,
Doth Heaven consign the innocent to suffering.
I tell thee, Flora's virtues might atone
For all the massacres her sires have done,
Since first the Pictish race their stained limbs
Array'd in wolf's skin.
Dur. Leonard, ere yet this beggar's scrip and cloak

Supplied the place of mitre and of crosier,
Which in these alter'd lands must not be worn,
I was superior of a brotherhood
Of holy men,—the Prior of Lanercost.
Nobles then sought my footstool many a league,
There to unload their sins—questions of conscience
Of deepest import were not deem'd too nice
For my decision, youth.—But not even then,
With mitre on my brow, and all the voice
Which Rome gives to a father of her church,
Dared I pronounce so boldly on the ways
Of hidden Providence, as thou, young man,
Whose chiefest knowledge is to track a stag,
Or wind a bugle, hast presumed to do.

Leon. Nay, I pray forgive me,
Father; thou know'st I meant not to presume——

Dur. Can I refuse thee pardon?—Thou art all
That war and change have left to the poor Durward.
Thy father, too, who lost his life and fortune
Defending Lanercost, when its fair aisles
Were spoil'd by sacrilege—I bless'd his banner,
And yet it prosper'd not. But—all I could—
Thee from the wreck I saved, and for thy sake
Have still dragg'd on my life of pilgrimage
And penitence upon the hated shores
I else had left for ever. Come with me,
And I will teach thee there is healing in
The wounds which friendship gives.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The Scene changes to the interior of the Castle. An apartment is discovered, in which there is much appearance of present poverty, mixed with some relics of former grandeur. On the wall hangs, amongst other things, a suit of ancient armour; by the table is a covered basket; behind, and concealed by it, the carcass of a roe-deer. There is a small latticed window, which, appearing to perforate a wall of great thickness, is supposed to look out towards the drawbridge. It is in the shape of a loop-hole for musketry; and, as is not unusual in old buildings, is placed so high up in the wall, that it is only approached by five or six narrow stone steps.

Eleanor, the wife of Oswald of Devorgoil, Flora and Katleen, her Daughter and Niece, are discovered at work. The former spins, the latter are embroidering. Eleanor quits her own labour to examine the manner in which Flora is executing her task, and shakes her head as if dissatisfied.

Ele. Fy on it, Flora; this botch'd work of thine
Shows that thy mind is distant from thy task.
The finest tracery of our old cathedral
Had not a richer, freer, bolder pattern,
Than Flora once could trace. Thy thoughts are wandering.

Flo. They're with my father. Broad upon the lake
The evening sun sunk down; huge piles of clouds,
Crimson and sable, rose upon his disk,
And quench'd him ere his setting, like some champion
In his last conflict, losing all his glory.
Sure signals those of storm. And if my father
Be on his homeward road——

Ele. But that he will not.
Baron of Devorgoil, this day at least
He banquets with the nobles, who the next
Would scarce vouchsafe an alms to save his household

From want or famine. Thanks to a kind friend,
For one brief space we shall not need their aid.
Flo. [*joyfully.*] What! knew you then his gift?
How silly I that would, yet durst not tell it!
I fear my father will condemn us both,
That easily accepted such a present.
Kat. Now, here's the game a bystander sees better
Than those who play it.—My good aunt is pondering
On the good cheer which Gullcrammer has sent us,
And Flora thinks upon the forest venison. [*Aside.*
Ele. [*to Flo.*] Thy father need not know on 't—'tis a boon
Comes timely, when frugality, nay, abstinence,
Might scarce avail us longer. I had hoped
Ere now a visit from the youthful donor,
That we might thank his bounty; and perhaps
My Flora thought the same, when Sunday's kerchief
And the best kirtle were sought out, and donn'd
To grace a work-day evening.
Flo. Nay, mother, that is judging all too close!
My work-day gown was torn—my kerchief sullied;
And thus—But, think you, will the gallant come?
Ele. He will, for with these dainties came a message
From gentle Master Gullcrammer, to intimate——
Flo. [*greatly disappointed.*] Gullcrammer?
Kat. There burst the bubble—down fell house of cards,
And cousin's like to cry for 't! [*Aside.*
Ele. Gullcrammer? ay, Gullcrammer—thou scorn'st not at him?
'Twere something short of wisdom in a maiden,
Who, like the poor bat in the Grecian fable,
Hovers betwixt two classes in the world,
And is disclaim'd by both the mouse and bird.
Kat. I am the poor mouse,
And may go creep into what hole I list,
And no one heed me—Yet I'll waste a word
Of counsel on my betters.—Kind my aunt,
And you, my gentle cousin, were 't not better
We thought of dressing this same gear for supper,
Than quarrelling about the worthless donor?
Ele. Peace, minx!
Flo. Thou hast no feeling, cousin Katleen.
Kat. Soh! I have brought them both on my poor shoulders,
So meddling peace-makers are still rewarded:
E'en let them to 't again, and fight it out.
Flo. Mother, were I disclaim'd of every class,
I would not therefore so disclaim myself,
As even a passing thought of scorn to waste
On cloddish Gullcrammer.
Ele. List to me, love, and let adversity
Incline thine ear to wisdom. Look around thee—
Of the gay youths who boast a noble name,
Which will incline to wed a dowerless damsel?
And of the yeomanry, who think'st thou, Flora,
Would ask to share the labours of his farm
And high-born beggar?—This young man is modest—
Flo. Silly, good mother; sheepish, if you will it.
Ele. E'en call it what you list—the softer temper,
The fitter to endure the bitter sallies
Of one whose wit is all too sharp for mine.
Flo. Mother you cannot mean it as you say;
You cannot bid me prize conceited folly?
Ele. Content thee, child—each lot has its own blessings.

This youth, with his plain-dealing honest suit,
Proffers thee quiet, peace, and competence,
Redemption from a home, o'er which fell Fate
Stoops like a falcon.—O, if thou couldst choose
(As no such choice is given) 'twixt such a mate
And some proud noble!—Who, in sober judgment,
Would like to navigate, the heady river,
Dashing in fury from its parent mountain,
More than the waters of the quiet lake?
Kat. Now can I hold no longer—Lake, good aunt?
Nay, in the name of truth, say mill-pond, horse-pond;
Or if there be a pond more miry,
More sluggish, mean-derived, and base than either,
Be such Gullcrammer's emblem—and his portion!
Flo. I would that he or I were in our grave,
Rather than thus his suit should goad me!—Mother,
Flora of Devorgoil, though low in fortunes,
Is still too high in mind to join her name
With such a base-born churl as Gullcrammer.
Ele. You are trim maidens both!
[*To Flora.*] Have you forgotten,
Or did you mean to call to *my* remembrance
Thy father chose a wife of peasant blood?
Flo. Will you speak thus to me, or think the stream
Can mock the fountain it derives its source from?
My venerated mother, in that name
Lies all on earth a child should chiefest honour;
And with that name to mix reproach or taunt,
Were only short of blasphemy to Heaven.
Ele. Then listen, Flora, to that mother's counsel,
Or rather profit by that mother's fate.
Your father's fortunes were but bent, not broken,
Until he listen'd to his rash affection.
Means were afforded to redeem his house,
Ample and large—the hand of a rich heiress
Awaited, almost courted, his acceptance;
He saw my beauty—such it then was call'd,
Or such at least he thought it—the wither'd bush,
Whate'er it now may seem, had blossoms then,—
And he forsook the proud and wealthy heiress,
To wed with me and ruin——
Kat. [*aside.*] The more fool,
Say I, apart, the peasant maiden then,
Who might have chose a mate from her own hamlet.
Ele. Friends fell off,
And to his own resources, his own counsels,
Abandon'd, as they said, the thoughtless prodigal,
Who had exchanged rank, riches, pomp, and honour,
For the mean beauties of a cottage maid.
Flo. It was done like my father,
Who scorn'd to sell what wealth can never buy—
True love and free affections. And he loves you!
If you have suffer'd in a weary world,
Your sorrows have been jointly borne, and love
Has made the load sit lighter.
Ele. Ay, but a misplaced match hath that deep curse in 't,
That can embitter e'en the purest streams
Of true affection. Thou hast seen me seek,
With the strict caution early habits taught me,
To match our wants and means—hast seen thy father
With aristocracy's high brow of scorn,
Spurn at economy, the cottage virtue,
As best befitting her whose sires were peasants:
Nor can I, when I see my lineage scorn'd,

Always conceal in what contempt I hold
The fancied claims of rank he clings to fondly.
Flo. Why will you do so?—well you know it chafes him.
Ele. Flora, thy mother is but mortal woman,
Nor can at all times check an eager tongue.
Kat. [*aside.*] That's no new tiding to her niece and daughter.
Ele. O mayst thou never know the spited feelings
That gender discord in adversity
Betwixt the dearest friends and truest lovers!
In the chill damping gale of poverty,
If Love's lamp go not out, it gleams but palely,
And twinkles in the socket.
Flo. But tenderness can screen it with her veil,
Till it revive again. By gentleness, good mother,
How oft I've seen you soothe my father's mood!
Kat. Now there speak youthful hope and fantasy! [*Aside.*
Ele. That is an easier task in youth than age;
Our temper hardens, and our charms decay,
And both are needed in that art of soothing.
Kat. And there speaks sad experience. [*Aside.*
Ele. Besides, since that our state was utter desperate,
Darker his brow, more dangerous grow his words;
Fain would I snatch thee from the woe and wrath
Which darken'd long my life, and soon must end it.
[*A knocking without; Eleanor shows alarm.*
It was thy father's knock, haste to the gate.
[*Exeunt Flora and Katleen.*
What can have happ'd?—he thought to stay the night.
This gear must not be seen.
[*As she is about to remove the basket, she sees the body of the roe-deer.*
What have we here? a roe-deer!—as I fear it,
This was the gift of which poor Flora thought.
The young and handsome hunter,—but time presses.
[*She removes the basket and the roe into a closet. As she has done—*

Enter OSWALD *of* DEVORGOIL, FLORA, *and* KATLEEN. [*He is dressed in a scarlet cloak, which should seem worn and old—a headpiece, and old-fashioned sword—the rest of his dress that of a peasant. His countenance and manner should express the moody and irritable haughtiness of a proud man involved in calamity, and who has been exposed to recent insult.*]

Osw. [*addressing his wife.*] The sun hath set—why is the drawbridge lower'd?
Ele. The counterpoise has fail'd, and Flora's strength,
Katleen's, and mine united, could not raise it.
Osw. Flora and thou! A goodly garrison
To hold a castle, which, if fame say true,
Once foil'd the King of Norse and all his rovers.
Ele. It might be so in ancient times, but now——
Osw. A herd of deer might storm proud Devorgoil.
Kat. [*aside to Flo.*] You, Flora, know full well one deer already
Has enter'd at the breach; and, what is worse,
The escort is not yet march'd off, for Blackthorn
Is still within the castle.
Flo. In Heaven's name, rid him out on't, ere my father
Discovers he is here! Why went he not
Before?
Kat. Because I staid him on some little business;
I had a plan to scare poor paltry Gullcrammer
Out of his paltry wits.
Flo. Well, haste ye now,
And try to get him off.
Kat. I will not promise that.
I would not turn an honest hunter's dog,

So well I love the woodcraft, out of shelter
In such a night as this—far less his master:
But I'll do this, I'll try to hide him for you.
Osw. [*whom his wife has assisted to take off his cloak and feathered cap.*] Ay, take them off, and bring my peasant's bonnet
And peasant's plaid—I'll noble it no farther.
Let them erase my name from honour's lists,
And drag my scutcheon at their horses' heels;
I have deserved it all, for I am poor,
And poverty hath neither right of birth,
Nor rank, relation, claim, nor privilege,
To match a new-coin'd viscount, whose good grandsire,
The Lord be with him, was a careful skipper,
And steer'd his paltry skiff 'twixt Leith and Campvere—
Marry, sir, he could buy Geneva cheap,
And knew the coast by moonlight.
Flo. Mean you the Viscount Ellondale, my father?
What strife has been between you?
Osw. O, a trifle!
Not worth a wise man's thinking twice about—
Precedence is a toy—a superstition
About a table's end, joint-stool, and trencher.
Something was once thought due to long descent,
And something to Galwegia's oldest baron,—
But let that pass—a dream of the old time.
Ele. It is indeed a dream.
Osw. [*turning upon her rather quickly.*] Ha! said ye, let me hear these words more plain.
Ele. Alas! they are but echoes of your own.
Match'd with the real woes that hover o'er us,
What are the idle visions of precedence,
But, as you term them, dreams, and toys, and trifles,
Not worth a wise man's thinking twice upon?
Osw. Ay, 'twas for you I framed that consolation,
The true philosophy of clouted shoe
And linsey-woolsey kirtle. I know, that minds
Of nobler stamp receive no dearer motive
Than what is link'd with honour. Ribands, tassels,
Which are but shreds of silk and spangled tinsel—
The right of place, which in itself is momentary—
A word, which is but air—may in themselves,
And to the nobler file, be steep'd so richly
In that elixir, honour, that the lack
Of things so very trivial in themselves
Shall be misfortune. One shall seek for them
O'er the wild waves—one in the deadly breach
And battle's headlong front—one in the paths
Of midnight study; and, in gaining these
Emblems of honour, each will hold himself
Repaid for all his labours, deeds, and dangers.
What then should he think, knowing them his own,
Who sees what warriors and what sages toil for,
The formal and establish'd marks of honour,
Usurp'd from him by upstart insolence?
Ele. [*who has listened to the last speech with some impatience.*] This is but empty declamation, Oswald.
The fragments left at yonder full-spread banquet,
Nay, even the poorest crust swept from the table,
Ought to be far more precious to a father,
Whose family lacks food, than the vain boast,
He sate at the board-head.
Osw. Thou'lt drive me frantic!—I will tell thee, woman—
Yet why to thee? There is another ear
Which that tale better suits, and he shall hear it.

[*Looks at his sword, which he has unbuckled, and addresses the rest of the speech to it.*

Yes, trusty friend, my father knew thy worth,
And often proved it—often told me of it—
Though thou and I be now held lightly of,
And want the gilded hatchments of the time,
I think we both may prove true metal still.
'Tis thou shalt tell this story, right this wrong:
Rest thou till time is fitting.
[*Hangs up the sword.*

[*The Women look at each other with anxiety during this speech, which they partly overhear. They both approach Oswald.*

Ele. Oswald—my dearest husband!

Flo. My dear father!

Osw. Peace, both!—we speak no more of this. I go
To heave the drawbridge up. [*Exit.*

KATLEEN *mounts the steps towards the loop-hole, looks out, and speaks.*

The storm is gathering fast; broad, heavy drops
Fall plashing on the bosom of the lake,
And dash its inky surface into circles;
The distant hills are hid in wreaths of darkness.
'Twill be a fearful night.

OSWALD *re-enters, and throws himself into a seat.*

Ele. More dark and dreadful
Than is our destiny, it cannot be.

Osw. [*to Flo.*] Such is Heaven's will—it is our part to bear it.
We're warranted, my child, from ancient story
And blessed writ, to say, that song assuages
The gloomy cares that prey upon our reason,
And wake a strife betwixt our better feelings
And the fierce dictates of the headlong passions.
Sing, then, my love; for if a voice have influence
To mediate peace betwixt me and my destiny,
Flora, it must be thine.

Flo. My best to please you!

SONG

When the tempest's at the loudest,
On its gale the eagle rides;
When the ocean rolls the proudest,
Through the foam the sea-bird glides—
All the rage of wind and sea
Is subdued by constancy.

Gnawing want and sickness pining,
All the ills that men endure;
Each their various pangs combining,
Constancy can find a cure—
Pain, and Fear, and Poverty,
Are subdued by constancy.

Bar me from each wonted pleasure,
Make me abject, mean, and poor;
Heap on insults without measure,
Chain me to a dungeon floor—
I'll be happy, rich, and free,
If endow'd with constancy.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A Chamber in a distant part of the Castle. A large Window in the flat scene, supposed to look on the Lake, which is occasionally illuminated by lightning. There is a Couch-bed in the Room, and an antique Cabinet.

Enter KATLEEN, *introducing* BLACKTHORN.

Kat. This was the destined scene of action, Blackthorn,
And here our properties. But all in vain,
For of Gullcrammer we'll see nought to-night,
Except the dainties that I told you of.

Bla. O, if he's left that same hog's face and sausages,
He will try back upon them, never fear it.
The cur will open on the trail of bacon,
Like my old brach-hound.

Kat. And should that hap, we'll play our comedy.—
Shall we not, Blackthorn? Thou shalt be Owlspiegle——

Bla. And who may that hard-named person be?
Kat. I've told you nine times over.
Bla. Yes, pretty Katleen, but my eyes were busy
In looking at you all the time you were talking;
And so I lost the tale.
Kat. Then shut your eyes, and let your goodly ears
Do their good office.
Bla. That were too hard penance.
Tell but thy tale once more, and I will hearken
As if I were thrown out, and listening for
My bloodhound's distant bay.
Kat. A civil simile!
Then, for the tenth time, and the last—be told,
Owlspiegle was of old the wicked barber
To Erick, wicked Lord of Devorgoil.
Bla. The chief who drown'd his captives in the Solway—
We all have heard of him.
Kat. A hermit hoar, a venerable man—
So goes the legend—came to wake repentance
In the fierce lord, and tax'd him with his guilt;
But he, heart-harden'd, turn'd into derision
The man of heaven, and, as his dignity
Consisted much in a long reverend beard,
Which reach'd his girdle, Erick caused his barber,
This same Owlspiegle, violate its honours
With sacrilegious razor, and clip his hair
After the fashion of a roguish fool.
Bla. This was reversing of our ancient proverb,
And shaving for the devil's, not for God's sake.
Kat. True, most grave Blackthorn; and in punishment
Of this foul act of scorn, the barber's ghost
Is said to have no resting after death,
But haunts these halls, and chiefly this same chamber,
Where the profanity was acted, trimming
And clipping all such guests as sleep within it.
Such is at least the tale our elders tell,
With many others, of this haunted castle.
Bla. And you would have me take this shape of Owlspiegle,
And trim the wise Melchisedek!—I wonnot.
Kat. You will not!
Bla. No—unless you bear a part.
Kat. What! can you not alone play such a farce?
Bla. Not I—I'm dull. Besides, we foresters
Still hunt our game in couples. Look you, Katleen,
We danced at Shrovetide—then you were my partner;
We sung at Christmas—you kept time with me;
And if we go a mumming in this business,
By heaven, you must be one, or Master Gullcrammer
Is like to rest unshaven——
Kat. Why, you fool,
What end can this serve?
Bla. Nay, I know not, I.
But if we keep this wont of being partners,
Why, use makes perfect—who knows what may happen?
Kat. Thou art a foolish patch—
But sing our carol,
As I have alter'd it, with some few words
To suit the characters, and I will bear——
[*Gives a paper.*
Bla. Part in the gambol. I'll go study quickly.
Is there no other ghost, then, haunts the castle,
But this same barber shave-a-penny goblin?
I thought they glanced in every beam of moonshine,
As frequent as the bat.
Kat. I've heard my aunt's high husband tell of prophecies,
And fates impending o'er the house of Devorgoil!
Legends first coin'd by ancient superstition,
And render'd current by credulity
And pride of lineage. Five years have I dwelt,

And ne'er saw anything more mischievous
Than what I am myself.
Bla. And that is quite enough, I warrant you.
But, stay, where shall I find a dress
To play this—what d'ye call him—Owlspiegle?
Kat. [*takes dresses out of the cabinet.*] Why, there are his own clothes,
Preserved with other trumpery of the sort,
For we have kept nought but what is good for nought.
[*She drops a cap as she draws out the clothes. Blackthorn lifts it, and gives it to her.*
Nay, keep it for thy pains—it is a coxcomb;
So call'd in ancient times, in ours a fool's cap;
For you must know they kept a Fool at Devorgoil
In former days; but now are well contented
To play the fool themselves, to save expenses;
Yet give it me, I'll find a worthy use for 't.
I'll take this page's dress, to play the page
Cockledemoy, who waits on ghostly Owlspiegle;
And yet 'tis needless, too, for Gullcrammer
Will scarce be here to-night.
Bla. I tell you that he will—I will uphold
His plighted faith and true allegiance
Unto a sous'd sow's face and sausages,
And such the dainties that you say he sent you,
Against all other likings whatsoever,
Except a certain sneaking of affection,
Which makes some folks I know of play the fool,
To please some other folks.
Kat. Well, I do hope he'll come—there's first a chance
He will be cudgell'd by my noble uncle—
I cry his mercy—by my good aunt's husband,
Who did vow vengeance, knowing nought of him
But by report, and by a limping sonnet
Which he had fashion'd to my cousin's glory,
And forwarded by blind Tom Long the carrier;
So there's the chance, first of a hearty beating,
Which failing, we've this after-plot of vengeance.
Bla. Kind damsel, how considerate and merciful!
But how shall we get off, our parts being play'd?
Kat. For that we are well fitted; here's a trap-door
Sinks with a counterpoise—you shall go that way.
I'll make my exit yonder—'neath the window,
A balcony communicates with the tower
That overhangs the lake.
Bla. 'Twere a rare place, this house of Devorgoil,
To play at hide-and-seek in—shall we try,
One day, my pretty Katleen?
Kat. Hands off, rude ranger! I'm no managed hawk
To stoop to lure of yours.—But bear you gallantly;
This Gullcrammer hath vex'd my cousin much,
I fain would have some vengeance.
Bla. I'll bear my part with glee;—he spoke irreverently
Of practice at a mark!
Kat. That cries for vengeance.
But I must go; I hear my aunt's shrill voice!
My cousin and her father will scream next.
Ele. (*at a distance.*] Katleen! Katleen!
Bla. Hark to old Sweetlips!
Away with you before the full cry open—
But stay, what have you there?
Kat. [*with a bundle she has taken from the wardrobe.*] My dress, my page's dress—let it alone.
Bla. Your tiring-room is not, I hope, far distant;
You're inexperienced in these new habiliments—
I am most ready to assist your toilet.
Kat. Out, you great ass! was ever such a fool! [*Runs off.*

BLA. [*sings.*]

O, Robin Hood was a bowman good,
And a bowman good was he,
And he met with a maiden in merry Sherwood,
All under the greenwood tree.

Now give me a kiss, quoth bold Robin Hood,
Now give me a kiss, said he,
For there never came maid into merry Sherwood,
But she paid the forester's fee.

I've coursed this twelvemonth this sly puss, young Katleen,
And she has dodged me, turn'd beneath my nose,
And flung me out a score of yards at once;
If this same gear fadge right, I'll cote and mouth her,
And then! whoop! dead! dead! dead!—She is the metal
To make a woodman's wife of!——
[*Pauses a moment.*
Well—I can find a hare upon her form
With any man in Nithsdale—stalk a deer,
Run Reynard to the earth for all his doubles,
Reclaim a haggard hawk that's wild and wayward,
Can bait a wild-cat,—sure the devil's in 't
But I can match a woman—I'll to study.
[*Sits down on the couch to examine the paper.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to the inhabited apartment of the Castle, as in the last Scene of the preceding Act. A fire is kindled, by which OSWALD sits in an attitude of deep and melancholy thought, without paying attention to what passes around him. ELEANOR is busy in covering a table; FLORA goes out and re-enters, as if busied in the kitchen. There should be some by-play—the women whispering together, and watching the state of OSWALD; then separating, and seeking to avoid his observation, when he casually raises his head, and drops it again. This must be left to taste and management. The Women, in the first part of the scene, talk apart, and as if fearful of being overheard; the by-play of stopping occasionally, and attending to OSWALD's movements, will give liveliness to the Scene.

Ele. Is all prepared?
Flo. Ay; but I doubt the issue
Will give my sire less pleasure than you hope for.
Ele. Tush, maid—I know thy father's humour better.
He was high-bred in gentle luxuries;
And when our griefs began, I've wept apart,
While lordly cheer and high-fill'd cups of wine
Were blinding him against the woe to come.
He has turn'd his back upon a princely banquet:
We will not spread his board—this night at least,
Since chance hath better furnish'd—with dry bread,
And water from the well.

Enter KATLEEN, *and hears the last speech.*

Kat. [*aside.*] Considerate aunt! she deems that a good supper
Were not a thing indifferent even to him
Who is to hang to-morrow. Since she thinks so,
We must take care the venison has due honour—
So much I owe the sturdy knave, Lance Blackthorn.
Flo. Mother, alas! when Grief turns reveller,
Despair is cup-bearer. What shall hap to-morrow?
Ele. I have learn'd carelessness from fruitless care.
Too long I've watch'd to-morrow; let it come
And cater for itself—Thou hear'st the thunder.
[*Low and distant thunder.*
This is a gloomy night—within, alas!
[*Looking at her husband.*

Still gloomier and more threatening
—Let us see
Whatever means we have to drive it
o'er,
And leave to Heaven to-morrow.
Trust me, Flora,
'Tis the philosophy of desperate
want
To match itself but with the present
evil,
And face one grief at once.
Away, I wish thine aid and not thy
counsel.
[*As Flora is about to go off, Gullcrammer's voice is heard behind the flat scene, as if from the drawbridge.*
Gul. [*behind.*] Hillo—hillo—hilloa
—hoa—hoa!
[*Oswald raises himself and listens; Eleanor goes up the steps, and opens the window at the loop-hole; Gullcrammer's voice is then heard more distinctly.*
Gul. Kind Lady Devorgoil—sweet
Mistress Flora!—
The night grows fearful, I have lost
my way,
And wander'd till the road turn'd
round with me,
And brought me back—For Heaven's
sake, give me shelter!
Kat. [*aside.*] Now, as I live, the
voice of Gullcrammer!
Now shall our gambol be play'd off
with spirit;
I'll swear I am the only one to whom
That screech-owl was e'er acceptable.
Osw. What bawling knave is this
that takes our dwelling
For some hedge-inn, the haunt of
lated drunkards?
Ele. What shall I say?—Go,
Katleen, speak to him.
Kat. [*aside.*] The game is in my
hands—I will say something
Will fret the Baron's pride—and
then he enters.
[*She speaks from the window.*] Good
sir, be patient!
We are poor folks—it is but six
Scotch miles
To the next borough town, where
your Reverence
May be accommodated to your
wants;
We are poor folks, an 't please your
Reverence,
And keep a narrow household—
there's no track
To lead your steps astray——
Gul. Nor none to lead them right.
—You kill me, lady,
If you deny me harbour. To budge
from hence,
And in my weary plight, were sudden
death,
Interment, funeral-sermon, tomb-
stone, epitaph.
Osw. Who's he that is thus
clamorous without?
[*To Ele.*] Thou know'st him?
Ele. [*confused.*] I know him?—no
—yes—'tis a worthy clergyman,
Benighted on his way;—but think
not of him.
Kat. The morn will rise when that
the tempest's past,
And if he miss the marsh, and can
avoid
The crags upon the left, the road is
plain.
Osw. Then this is all your piety!
—to leave
One whom the holy duties of his
office
Have summon'd over moor and
wilderness,
To pray beside some dying wretch's
bed,
Who (erring mortal) still would cleave
to life,
Or wake some stubborn sinner to
repentance,—
To leave him, after offices like these,
To choose his way in darkness 'twixt
the marsh
And dizzy precipice?
Ele. What can I do?
Osw. Do what thou canst—the
wealthiest do no more—
And if so much, 'tis well. These
crumbling walls,
While yet they bear a roof, shall now,
as ever,
Give shelter to the wanderer—Have
we food?
He shall partake it—Have we none?
the fast
Shall be accounted with the good
man's merits
And our misfortunes——
[*He goes to the loop-hole while he speaks, and places himself there in room of his Wife, who comes down with reluctance.*
Gul. [*without.*] Hillo—hoa—hoa!

By my good faith, I cannot plod it farther;
The attempt were death.
Osw. [*speaks from the window.*] Patience, my friend, I come to lower the drawbridge.
[*Descends, and exit.*
Ele. O, that the screaming bittern had his couch
Where he deserves it, in the deepest marsh!
Kat. I would not give this sport for all the rent
Of Devorgoil, when Devorgoil was richest!
[*To Ele.*] But now you chided me, my dearest aunt,
For wishing him a horse-pond for his portion?
Ele. Yes, saucy girl; but, an it please you, then
He was not fretting me; if he had sense enough,
And skill to bear him as some casual stranger,—
But he is dull as earth, and every hint
Is lost on him, as hail-shot on the cormorant,
Whose hide is proof except to musket-bullets!
Flo. [*apart.*] And yet to such a one would my kind mother,
Whose chiefest fault is loving me too fondly,
Wed her poor daughter!

Enter GULLCRAMMER, *his dress damaged by the storm;* ELEANOR *runs to meet him, in order to explain to him that she wished him to behave as a stranger.* GULLCRAMMER, *mistaking her approach for an invitation to familiarity, advances with the air of pedantic conceit belonging to his character, when* OSWALD *enters,*—ELEANOR *recovers herself, and assumes an air of distance*—GULLCRAMMER *is confounded, and does not know what to make of it.*

Osw. The counterpoise has clean given away; the bridge
Must e'en remain unraised, and leave us open,
For this night's course at least, to passing visitants,—
What have we here?—is this the reverend man?
[*He takes up the candle, and surveys Gullcrammer, who strives to sustain the inspection with confidence, while fear obviously contends with conceit and desire to show himself to the best advantage.*
Gul. Kind sir—or, good my lord—my band is ruffled,
But yet 'twas fresh this morning. This fell shower
Hath somewhat smirch'd my cloak, but you may note
It rates five marks yer yard; my doublet
Hath fairly 'scaped—'tis three-piled taffeta.
[*Opens his cloak, and displays his doublet.*
Osw. A goodly inventory—Art thou a preacher?
Gul. Yea—I laud Heaven and good Saint Mungo for it.
Osw. 'Tis the time's plague, when those that should weed follies
Out of the common field, have their own minds
O'errun with foppery — Envoys 'twixt heaven and earth,
Example should with precept join, to show us
How me may scorn the world with all its vanities.
Gul. Nay, the high heavens forefend that I were vain!
When our learn'd Principal such sounding laud
Gave to mine Essay on the hidden qualities
Of the sulphuric mineral, I disclaim'd
All self-exaltment. And [*turning to the women*] when at the dance,
The lovely Saccharissa Kirkencroft,
Daughter to Kirkencroft of Kirkencroft,
Graced me with her soft hand, credit me, ladies,
That still I felt myself a mortal man,
Though beauty smiled on me.
Osw. Come, sir, enough of this.
That you're our guest to-night, thank the rough heavens,
And all our worser fortunes; be conformable
Unto my rules; these are no Saccharissas

To gild with compliments. There's
in your profession,
As the best grain will have its piles
of chaff,
A certain whiffler, who hath dared
to bait
A noble maiden with love tales and
sonnets;
And if I meet him, his Geneva
cap
May scarce be proof to save his ass's
ears.
Kat. [*aside.*] Umph—I am strongly
tempted,
And yet I think I will be generous,
And give his brains a chance to save
his bones.
Then there's more humour in our
goblin plot,
Than in a simple drubbing.
Ele. [*apart to Flo.*] What shall we
do? If he discover him,
He'll fling him out at window.
Flo. My father's hint to keep him-
self unknown
Is all too broad, I think, to be
neglected.
Ele. But yet the fool, if we pro-
duce his bounty,
May claim the merit of presenting it;
And then we're but lost women for
accepting
A gift our needs made timely.
Kat. Do not produce them.
E'en let the fop go supperless to bed,
And keep his bones whole.
Osw. [*to his Wife.*] Hast thou
aught
To place before him ere he seek
repose?
Ele. Alas! too well you know
our needful fare
Is of the narrowest now, and knows
no surplus.
Osw. Shame us not with thy
niggard housekeeping;
He is a stranger—were it our last
crust,
And he the veriest coxcomb ere wore
taffeta,
A pitch he's little short of—he must
share it,
Though all should want to-morrow.
Gul. [*partly overhearing what passes
between them.*]
Nay, I am no lover of your sauced
dainties:
Plain food and plenty is my motto
still.
Your mountain air is bleak, and
brings an appetite:
A soused sow's face, now, to my
modest thinking,
Has ne'er a fellow. What think
these fair ladies
Of a sow's face and sausages?
[*Makes signs to Eleanor.*
Flo. Plague on the vulgar hind,
and on his courtesies,
The whole truth will come out!
Osw. What should they think,
but that you're like to lack
Your favourite dishes, sir, unless
perchance
You bring such dainties with you.
Gul. No, not *with* me; not, in-
deed,
Directly *with* me; but—Aha! fair
ladies! [*Makes signs again.*
Kat. He'll draw the beating down
—Were that the worst,
Heaven's will be done! [*Aside.*
Osw. [*apart.*] What can he mean?
—this is the veriest dog-whelp—
Still he's a stranger, and the latest
act
Of hospitality in this old mansion
Shall not be sullied.
Gul. Troth, sir, I think, under
the ladies' favour,
Without pretending skill in second
sight,
Those of my cloth being seldom con-
jurers——
Osw. I'll take my Bible-oath that
thou art none. [*Aside.*
Gul. I do opine, still with the
ladies' favour,
That I could guess the nature of our
supper:
I do not say in such and such pre-
cedence
The dishes will be placed; house-
wives, as you know,
On such forms have their fancies;
but, I say still,
That a sow's face and sausages——
Osw. Peace, sir!
O'er-driven jests (if this be one) are
insolent.
Flo. [*apart, seeing her mother un-
easy.*] The old saw still holds
true—a churl's benefits,
Sauced with his lack of feeling, sense,
and courtesy,
Savour like injuries.
[*A horn is winded without; then
a loud knocking at the gate.*

Leo. [*without.*] Ope, for the sake of love and charity!

[*Oswald goes to the loop-hole.*

Gul. Heaven's mercy! should there come another stranger,
And he half starved with wandering on the wolds,
The sow's face boasts no substance, nor the sausages,
To stand our reinforced attack! I judge, too,
By this starked Baron's language, there's no hope
Of a reserve of victuals.

Flo. Go to the casement, cousin.

Kat. Go yourself.
And bid the gallant who that bugle winded
Sleep in the storm-swept waste; as meet for him
As for Lance Blackthorn.—Come, I'll not distress you,
I'll get admittance for this second suitor,
And we'll play out this gambol at cross purposes.
But see, your father has prevented me.

Osw. [*seems to have spoken with those without, and answers.*] Well, I will ope the door; one guest already,
Driven by the storm, has claim'd my hospitality,
And you, if you were fiends, were scarce less welcome
To this my mouldering roof, than empty ignorance
And rank conceit—I hasten to admit you. [*Exit.*

Ele. [*to Flo.*] The tempest thickens. By that winded bugle,
I guess the guest that next will honour us.——
Little deceiver, that didst mock my troubles,
'Tis now thy turn to fear!

Flo. Mother, if I knew less or more of this
Unthought of and most perilous visitation,
I would your wishes were fulfill'd on me,
And I were wedded to a thing like yon.

Gul. [*approaching.*] Come, ladies, now you see the jest is threadbare,
And you must own that same sow's face and sausages——

Re-enter OSWALD *with* LEONARD, *supporting* BAULDIE DURWARD. OSWALD *takes a view of them, as formerly of* GULLCRAMMER, *then speaks.*

Osw. [*to Leo.*] By thy green cassock, hunting-spear, and bugle,
I guess thou art a huntsman?

Leo. [*bowing with respect.*] A ranger of the neighbouring royal forest,
Under the good Lord Nithsdale; huntsman, therefore,
In time of peace, and when the land has war,
To my best powers a soldier.

Osw. Welcome, as either. I have loved the chase
And was a soldier once.—This aged man,
What may he be?

Dur. [*recovering his breath.*] Is but a beggar, sir, an humble mendicant,
Who feels it passing strange, that from this roof,
Above all others, he should now crave shelter.

Osw. Why so? You're welcome both—only the word
Warrants more courtesy than our present means
Permit us to bestow. A huntsman and a soldier
May be a prince's comrade, much more mine;
And for a beggar—friend, there little lacks,
Save that blue gown and badge, and clouted pouches,
To make us comrades too; then welcome both,
And to a beggar's feast. I fear brown bread,
And water from the spring, will be the best on 't;
For we had cast to wend abroad this evening,
And left our larder empty.

Gul. Yet, if some kindly fairy,
In our behalf, would search its hid recesses,—
[*Apart*] We'll not go supperless now —we're three to one.—
Still do I say, that a soused face and sausages——

Osw. [*looks sternly at him, then at his wife.*] There's something under this, but that the present
Is not a time to question. [*To Ele.*] Wife, my mood
Is at such height of tide, that a turn'd feather
Would make me frantic now, with mirth or fury!
Tempt me no more—but if thou hast the things
This carrion crow so croaks for, bring them forth;
For, by my father's beard, if I stand caterer,
'Twill be a fearful banquet!

Ele. Your pleasure be obey'd—Come, aid me, Flora. [*Exeunt.*

[*During the following speeches the Women place dishes on the table.*]

Osw. [*to Dur.*] How did you lose your path?

Dur. E'en when we thought to find it, a wild meteor
Danced in the moss, and led our feet astray.—
I give small credence to the tales of old,
Of Friar's-lantern told, and Will-o'-Wisp,
Else would I say, that some malicious demon
Guided us in a round; for to the moat,
Which we had pass'd two hours since, were we led,
And there the gleam flicker'd and disappear'd,
Even on your drawbridge. I was so worn down,
So broke with labouring through marsh and moor,
That, wold I nold I, here my young conductor
Would needs implore for entrance; else, believe me,
I had not troubled you.

Osw. And why not, father?—have you e'er heard aught,
Or of my house or me, that wanderers,
Whom or their roving trade or sudden circumstance
Oblige to seek a shelter, should avoid
The House of Devorgoil?

Dur. Sir, I am English born—
Native of Cumberland. Enough is said
Why I should shun those bowers, whose lords were hostile
To English blood, and unto Cumberland
Most hostile and most fatal.

Osw. Ay, father. Once my grandsire plough'd and harrow'd,
And sow'd with salt, the streets of your fair towns;
But what of that?—you have the 'vantage now.

Dur. True, Lord of Devorgoil, and well believe I,
That not in vain we sought these towers to-night,
So strangely guided, to behold their state.

Osw. Ay, thou wouldst say, 'twas fit a Cumbrian beggar
Should sit an equal guest in his proud halls,
Whose fathers beggar'd Cumberland—Greybeard, let it be so,
I'll not dispute it with thee.

[*To Leo. who was speaking to Flora, but, on being surprised, occupied himself with the suit of armour.*]

What makest thou there, young man?

Leo. I marvell'd at this harness; it is larger
Than arms of modern days. How richly carved
With gold inlaid on steel—how close the rivets—
How justly fit the joints! I think the gauntlet
Would swallow twice my hand.

[*He is about to take down some part of the Armour; Oswald interferes.*

Osw. Do not displace it.
My grandsire, Erick, doubled human strength,
And almost human size—and human knowledge,
And human vice, and human virtue also,
As storm or sunshine chanced to occupy
His mental hemisphere. After a fatal deed,
He hung his armour on the wall, forbidding
It e'er should be ta'en down. There is a prophecy,

That of itself 'twill fall, upon the night
When, in the fiftieth year from his decease,
Devorgoil's feast is full. This is the era;
But, as too well you see, no meet occasion
Will do the downfall of the armour justice,
Or grace it with a feast. There let it bide,
Trying its strength with the old walls it hangs
Which shall fall soonest.

Dur. [*looking at the trophy with a mixture of feeling.*] Then there stern Erick's harness hangs untouch'd,
Since his last fatal raid on Cumberland!

Osw. Ay, waste and want, and recklessness—a comrade
Still yoked with waste and want—have stripp'd these walls
Of every other trophy. Antler'd skulls,
Whose branches vouch'd the tales old vassals told
Of desperate chases—partisans and spears—
Knights' barred helms and shields—the shafts and bows,
Axes and breastplates, of the hardy yeomanry—
The banners of the vanquish'd—signs these arms
Were not assumed in vain, have disappear'd.
Yes, one by one they all have disappear'd;
And now Lord Erick's harness hangs alone,
'Midst implements of vulgar husbandry
And mean economy; as some old warrior,
Whom want hath made an inmate of an alms-house,
Shows, mid the beggar'd spendthrifts, base mechanics,
And bankrupt pedlars, with whom fate has mix'd him.

Dur. Or rather like a pirate, whom the prison-house,
Prime leveller next the grave, hath for the first time
Mingled with peaceful captives, low in fortunes,
But fair in innocence.

Osw. [*looking at Dur. with surprise.*] Friend, thou art bitter!

Dur. Plain truth, sir, like the vulgar copper coinage,
Despised amongst the gentry, still finds value
And currency with beggars.

Osw. Be it so.
I will not trench on the immunities
I soon may claim to share. Thy features, too,
Though weather-beaten, and thy strain of language,
Relish of better days. Come hither, friend, [*They speak apart.*
And let me ask thee of thine occupation.

[*Leonard looks round, and, seeing Oswald engaged with Durward, and Gullcrammer with Eleanor, approaches towards Flora, who must give him an opportunity of doing so, with obvious attention on her part to give it the air of chance. The by-play here will rest with the Lady, who must engage the attention of the audience by playing off a little female hypocrisy and simple coquetry.*

Leo. Flora——

Flo. Ay, gallant huntsman, may she deign to question
Why Leonard came not at the appointed hour;
Or why he came at midnight?

Leo. Love has no certain loadstar, gentle Flora,
And oft gives up the helm to wayward pilotage.
To say the sooth—A beggar forced me hence,
And Will-o'-wisp did guide us back again.

Flo. Ay, ay, your beggar was the faded spectre
Of Poverty, that sits upon the threshold
Of these our ruin'd walls. I've been unwise,
Leonard, to let you speak so oft with me;
And you a fool to say what you have said.
E'en let us here break short; and, wise at length,
Hold each our separate way through life's wide ocean.

Leo. Nay, let us rather join our course together,
And share the breeze or tempest, doubling joys,
Relieving sorrows, warding evils off
With mutual effort, or enduring them
With mutual patience.
Flo. This is but flattering counsel —sweet and baneful;
But mine had wholesome bitter in 't.
Kat. Ay, ay; but like the sly apothecary,
You'll be the last to take the bitter drug
That you prescribe to others.
[*They whisper. Eleanor advances to interrupt them, followed by Gullcrammer.*
Ele. What, maid, no household cares? Leave to your elders
The task of filling passing strangers' ears
With the due notes of welcome.
Gul. Be it thine,
O Mistress Flora, the more useful talent
Of filling strangers' stomachs with substantials;
That is to say,—for learn'd commentators
Do so expound substantials in some places,—
With a sous'd bacon-face and sausages.
Flo. [*apart.*] Would thou wert sous'd, intolerable pedant,
Base, greedy, perverse, interrupting coxcomb!
Kat. Hush, coz, for we'll be avenged on him,
And ere this night goes o'er, else woman's wit
Cannot o'ertake her wishes.
[*She proceeds to arrange seats. Oswald and Durward come forward in conversation.*
Osw. I like thine humour well.— So all men beg——
Dur. Yes—I can make it good by proof. Your soldier
Begs for a leaf of laurel, and a line
In the Gazette. He brandishes his sword
To back his suit, and is a sturdy beggar—
The courtier begs a riband or a star,
And, like our gentler mumpers, is provided
With false certificates of health and fortune
Lost in the public service. For your lover,
Who begs a sigh, a smile, a lock of hair,
A buskin-point, he maunds upon the pad,
With the true cant of pure mendicity,
"The smallest trifle to relieve a Christian,
And if it like your Ladyship!"——
[*In a begging tone.*
Kat. [*apart.*] This is a cunning knave, and feeds the humour
Of my aunt's husband, for I must not say
Mine honour'd uncle. I will try a question.—
Your man of merit though, who serves the commonwealth,
Nor asks for a requital?——
[*To Durward.*
Dur. Is a dumb beggar,
And lets his actions speak like signs for him,
Challenging double guerdon.—Now, I'll show
How your true beggar has the fair advantage
O'er all the tribes of cloak'd mendicity
I have told over to you.—The soldier's laurel,
The statesman's riband, and the lady's favour,
Once won and gain'd, are not held worth a farthing
By such as longest, loudest, canted for them;
Whereas your charitable halfpenny,
Which is the scope of a true beggar's suit,
Is worth *two* farthings, and, in times of plenty,
Will buy a crust of bread.
Flo. [*interrupting him, and addressing her father.*] Sir, let me be a beggar with the time,
And pray you come to supper.
Ele. [*to Oswald, apart.*] Must *he* sit with us?
[*Looking at Durward.*
Osw. Ay, ay, what else—since we are beggars all?
When cloaks are ragged, sure their worth is equal
Whether at first they were of silk or woollen.

Ele. Thou art scarce consistent.
This day thou didst refuse a princely banquet,
Because a new-made lord was placed above thee;
And now——
Osw. Wife, I have seen, at public executions,
A wretch that could not brook the hand of violence
Should push him from the scaffold, pluck up courage,
And, with a desperate sort of cheerfulness,
Take the fell plunge himself—
Welcome then, beggars, to a beggar's feast!
Gul. [*who has in the meanwhile seated himself.*] But this is more. —A better countenance,—
Fair fall the hands that sous'd it!—than this hog's,
Or prettier provender than these same sausages,
(By what good friend sent hither, shall be nameless,
Doubtless some youth whom love hath made profuse,)
[*Smiling significantly at Eleanor and Flora.*
No prince need wish to peck at. Long, I ween,
Since that the nostrils of this house (by metaphor,
I mean the chimneys) smell'd a steam so grateful—
By your good leave I cannot dally longer. [*Helps himself.*
Osw. [*places Durward above Gullcrammer.*] Meanwhile, sir,
Please it your faithful learning to give place
To grey hairs and to wisdom; and, moreover,
If you had tarried for the benediction——
Gul. [*somewhat abashed.*] I said grace to myself.
Osw. [*not minding him.*]—And waited for the company of others,
It had been better fashion. Time has been,
I should have told a guest at Devorgoil,
Bearing himself thus forward, he was saucy.
[*He seats himself, and helps the company and himself in dumb-show. There should be a contrast betwixt the precision of his aristocratic civility, and the rude underbreeding of Gullcrammer.*
Osw. [*having tasted the dish next him.*] Why, this is venison, Eleanor!
Gul. Eh! What! Let's see—
[*Pushes across Oswald and helps himself.*
It may be venison—
I'm sure 'tis not beef, veal, mutton, lamb, or pork.
Eke am I sure, that be it what it will,
It is not half so good as sausages,
Or as a sow's face sous'd.
Osw. Eleanor, whence all this?—
Ele. Wait till to-morrow,
You shall know all. It was a happy chance
That furnish'd us to meet so many guests. [*Fills wine.*
Try if your cup be not as richly garnish'd
As is your trencher.[1]
Kat. [*apart.*] My aunt adheres to the good cautious maxim
Of,—"Eat your pudding, friend, and hold your tongue."
Osw. [*tastes the wine.*] It is the grape of Bordeaux.
Such dainties, once familiar to my board,
Have been estranged from 't long.
[*He again fills his glass, and continues to speak as he holds it up.*
Fill round, my friends—here is a treacherous friend now
Smiles in your face, yet seeks to steal the jewel,
Which is distinction between man and brute—
I mean our reason—this he does, and smiles.
But are not all friends treacherous? —one shall cross you
Even in your dearest interests—one shall slander you—
This steal your daughter, that defraud your purse;
But this gay flask of Bordeaux will but borrow
Your sense of mortal sorrows for a season,
And leave, instead, a gay delirium.

[1] Wooden trenchers should be used, and the quaigh, a Scottish drinking cup.

Methinks my brain, unused to such gay visitants,
The influence feels already!—we will revel!—
Our banquet shall be loud!—it is our last.
Katleen, thy song.
Kat. Not now, my lord—I mean to sing to-night
For this same moderate, grave, and reverend clergyman;
I'll keep my voice till then.
Ele. Your round refusal shows but cottage breeding.
Kat. Ay, my good aunt, for I was cottage-nurtured,
And taught, I think, to prize my own wild will
Above all sacrifice to compliment.
Here is a huntsman—in his eyes I read it,
He sings the martial song my uncle loves,
What time fierce Claver'se with his Cavaliers,
Abjuring the new change of government,
Forcing his fearless way through timorous friends,
And enemies as timorous, left the capital
To rouse in James's cause the distant Highlands.
Have you ne'er heard the song, my noble uncle?
Osw. Have I not heard, wench?—It was I rode next him,
'Tis thirty summers since—rode by his rein;
We marched on through the alarm'd city,
As sweeps the osprey through a flock of gulls,
Who scream and flutter, but dare no resistance
Against the bold sea-empress—They did murmur,
The crowds before us, in their sullen wrath,
And those whom we had pass'd, gathering fresh courage,
Cried havoc in the rear—we minded them
E'en as the brave bark minds the bursting billows,
Which, yielding to her bows, burst on her sides,
And ripple in her wake.—Sing me that strain, [*To Leonard.*
And thou shalt have a meed I seldom tender,
Because they're all I have to give—my thanks.
Leo. Nay, if you'll bear with what I cannot help,
A voice that's rough with hollowing to the hounds,
I'll sing the song even as old Rowland taught me.

SONG

AIR—"*The Bonnets of Bonny Dundee*"

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke,
"Ere the King's crown shall fall there are crowns to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves honour and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

"Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port, and let me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward, the drums they are beat;
But the Provost, douce man, said, "Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the Bow,
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow;
But the young plants of grace they look'd couthie and slee,
Thinking, luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny Dundee!
Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-market was cramm'd
As if half the West had set tryst to be hang'd;
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e,
As they watch'd for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill Cavaliers;
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurr'd to the foot of the proud Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke;
"Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose!
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth,
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the North;
There are wild Duniewassals three thousand times three,
Will cry *ho gh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barken'd bull-hide;
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;
The brass shall be burnish'd, the steel shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the fox;
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!"
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clash'd, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee,
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up the men,
Come open your gates, and let me gae free,
For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!

Ele. Katleen, do thou sing now. Thy uncle's cheerful;
We must not let his humour ebb again.
Kat. But I'll do better, aunt, than if I sung,
For Flora can sing blithe; so can this huntsman,
As he has shown e'en now; let them duet it.
Osw. Well, huntsman, we must give to freakish maiden
The freedom of her fancy.—Raise the carol,
And Flora, if she can, will join the measure.

SONG

When friends are met o'er merry cheer,
And lovely eyes are laughing near,
And in the goblet's bosom clear
The cares of day are drown'd;
When puns are made, and bumpers quaff'd,
And wild Wit shoots his roving shaft,
And Mirth his jovial laugh has laugh'd,
Then is our banquet crown'd,
Ah gay,
Then is our banquet crown'd.

When glees are sung, and catches troll'd,
And bashfulness grows bright and bold,
And beauty is no longer cold,
And age no longer dull;
When chimes are brief, and cocks do crow,

To tell us it is time to go,
Yet how to part we do not know,
Then is our feast at full,
Ah gay,
Then is our feast at full.

Osw. [*rises with the cup in his hand.*] Devorgoil's feast is full—
Drink to the pledge!
[*A tremendous burst of thunder follows these words of the Song; and the Lightning should seem to strike the suit of black Armour, which falls with a crash.*[1] *All rise in surprise and fear except Gullcrammer, who tumbles over backwards, and lies still.*
Osw. That sounded like the judgment-peal—the roof
Still trembles with the volley.
Dur. Happy those
Who are prepared to meet such fearful summons.—
Leonard, what dost thou there?
Leo. [*supporting Flo.*] The duty of a man—
Supporting innocence. Were it the final call,
I were not misemploy'd.
Osw. The armour of my grandsire hath fall'n down,
And old saws have spoke truth.—[*Musing.*] The fiftieth year—
Devorgoil's feast at fullest! What to think of it——
Leo. [*lifting a scroll which had fallen with the armour.*] This may inform us.
[*Attempts to read the manuscript, shakes his head, and gives it to Oswald.*
But not to eyes unlearn'd it tells its tidings.
Osw. Hawks, hounds, and revelling consumed the hours
I should have given to study.
[*Looks at the manuscript.*
These characters I spell not more than thou.
They are not of our day, and, as I think,
Not of our language.—Where's our scholar now,
So forward at the banquet? Is he laggard
Upon a point of learning?
Leo. Here is the man of letter'd dignity,
E'en in a piteous case.
[*Drags Gullcrammer forward.*
Osw. Art waking, craven? canst thou read this scroll?
Or art thou only learn'd in sousing swine's flesh,
And prompt in eating it?
Gul. Eh—ah!—oh—ho!—Have you no better time
To tax a man with riddles, than the moment
When he scarce knows whether he's dead or living?
Osw. Confound the pedant!—Can you read the scroll,
Or can you not, sir? If you *can*, pronounce
Its meaning speedily.
Gul. *Can* I read it, quotha!
When at our learned University,
I gain'd first premium for Hebrew learning,—
Which was a pound of high-dried Scottish snuff,
And half a peck of onions, with a bushel
Of curious oatmeal,—our learn'd Principal
Did say, "Melchisedek, thou canst do anything!"
Now comes he with his paltry scroll of parchment,
And, "*Can* you read it?"—After such affront,
The point is, if I *will*.
Osw. A point soon solved,
Unless you choose to sleep among the frogs;
For look you, sir, there is the chamber window,
Beneath it lies the lake.
Ele. Kind master Gullcrammer, beware my husband,
He brooks no contradiction—'tis his fault,
And in his wrath he's dangerous.
Gul. [*looks at the scroll, and mutters as if reading.*] *Hashgaboth hotch-potch*—
A simple matter this to make a rout of—
Ten rashersen bacon, mish-mash venison,

[1] I should think this may be contrived, by having a transparent zig-zag in the flat scene, immediately above the armour, suddenly and very strongly illuminated.

Sausagian sowsed-face—'Tis a simple catalogue
Of our small supper—made by the grave sage
Whose prescience knew this night that we should feast
On venison, hash'd sow's face, and sausages,
And hung his steel-coat for a supper bell—
E'en let us to our provender again,
For it is written we shall finish it,
And bless our stars the lightning left it us.
Osw. This must be impudence or ignorance!—
The spirit of rough Erick stirs within me,
And I will knock thy brains out if thou palterest!
Expound the scroll to me!
Gul. You're over hasty;
And yet you may be right too—'Tis Samaritan,
Now I look closer on 't, and I did take it
For simple Hebrew.
Dur. 'Tis Hebrew to a simpleton,
That we see plainly, friend—Give me the scroll.
Gul. Alas, good friend! what would you do with it?
Dur. [*takes it from him.*] My best to read it, sir—The character is Saxon,
Used at no distant date within this district;
And thus the tenor runs—nor in Samaritan,
Nor simple Hebrew, but in wholesome English:—

Devorgoil, thy bright moon waneth,
And the rust thy harness staineth;
Servile guests the banquet soil
Of the once proud Devorgoil.
But should Black Erick's armour fall,
Look for guests shall scare you all!
They shall come ere peep of day,—
Wake and watch, and hope and pray.

Kat. [*to Flo.*] Here is fine foolery—an old wall shakes
At a loud thunder-clap—down comes a suit
Of ancient armour, when its wasted braces
Were all too rotten to sustain its weight—
A beggar cries out, Miracle! and your father,
Weighing the importance of his name and lineage,
Must needs believe the dotard!
Flo. Mock not, I pray you; this may be too serious.
Kat. And if I live till morning, I will have
The power to tell a better tale of wonder
Wrought on wise Gullcrammer. I'll go prepare me. [*Exit.*
Flo. I have not Katleen's spirit, yet I hate
This Gullcrammer too heartily, to stop
Any disgrace that's hasting towards him.
Osw. [*to whom the Beggar has been again reading the scroll.*] 'Tis a strange prophecy!—The silver moon,
Now waning sorely, is our ancient bearing—
Strange and unfitting guests—
Gul. [*interrupting him.*] Ay, ay, the matter
Is, as you say, all moonshine in the water.
Osw. How mean you, sir? [*threatening.*
Gul. To show that I can rhyme
With yonder bluegown. Give me breath and time,
I will maintain, in spite of his pretence,
Mine exposition had the better sense—
It spoke good victuals and increase of cheer;
And his, more guests to eat what we have here—
An increment right needless.
Osw. Get thee gone;
To kennel, hound!
Gul. The hound will have his bone.
[*Takes up the platter of meat, and a flask.*
Osw. Flora, show him his chamber—take him hence,
Or, by the name I bear, I'll see his brains.
Gul. Ladies, good-night!—I spare you, sir, the pains.
[*Exit, lighted by Flora with a lamp.*

Osw. The owl is fled.—I'll not to bed to-night;
There is some change impending o'er this house,
For good or ill. I would some holy man
Were here, to counsel us what we should do!
Yon witless thin-faced gull is but a cossock
Stuff'd out with chaff and straw.
Dur. [*assuming an air of dignity.*] I have been wont,
In other days, to point to erring mortals
The rock which they should anchor on.
[*He holds up a Cross—the rest take a posture of devotion, and the Scene closes.*

ACT III.—Scene I.

A ruinous Anteroom in the Castle.

Enter Katleen, *fantastically dressed to play the Character of Cockledemoy, with the visor in her hand.*

Kat. I've scarce had time to glance at my sweet person,
Yet this much could I see, with half a glance,
My elfish dress becomes me—I'll not mask me
Till I have seen Lance Blackthorn. Lance! I say— [*Calls.*
Blackthorn, make haste!

Enter Blackthorn, *half dressed as Owlspiegle.*

Bla. Here am I—Blackthorn in the upper half,
Much at your service; but my nether parts
Are goblinised and Owlspiegled. I had much ado
To get these trankums on. I judge Lord Erick
Kept no good house, and starved his quondam barber.
Kat. Peace, ass, and hide you—Gullcrammer is coming;
He left the hall before, but then took fright,
And e'en sneak'd back. The Lady Flora lights him—
Trim occupation for her ladyship!
Had you seen Leonard, when she left the hall
On such fine errand!
Bla. This Gullcrammer shall have a bob extraordinary
For my good comrade's sake.—But tell me, Katleen,
What dress is this of yours?
Kat. A page's, fool!
Bla. I'm accounted no great scholar,
But 'tis a page that I would fain peruse
A little closer. [*Approaches her.*
Kat. Put on your spectacles,
And try if you can read it at this distance,
For you shall come no nearer.
Bla. But is there nothing, then, save rank imposture,
In all these tales of goblinry at Devorgoil?
Kat. My aunt's grave lord thinks otherwise, supposing
That his great name so interests the Heavens,
That miracles must needs bespeak its fall—
I would that I were in a lowly cottage
Beneath the greenwood, on its walls no armour
To court the levin-bolt——
Bla. And a kind husband, Katleen,
To ward such dangers as must needs come nigh.—
My father's cottage stands so low and lone,
That you would think it solitude itself;
The greenwood shields it from the northern blast,
And, in the woodbine round its latticed casement,
The linnet's sure to build the earliest nest
In all the forest.
Kat. Peace, you fool, they come.

Flora *lights* Gullcrammer *across the Stage.*

Kat. [*when they have passed.*] Away with you!
On with your cloak—be ready at the signal.
Bla. And shall we talk of that same cottage, Katleen,
At better leisure? I have much to say
In favour of my cottage.
Kat. If you will be talking,
You know I can't prevent you.

Bla. That's enough.
[*Aside.*] I shall have leave, I see, to spell the page
A little closer, when the due time comes.

Scene II.

Scene changes to Gullcrammer's Sleeping Apartment. He enters, ushered in by Flora, who sets on the table a flask, with the lamp.

Flo. A flask, in case your Reverence be athirsty;
A light, in case your Reverence be afear'd;—
And so sweet slumber to your Reverence.
Gul. Kind Mistress Flora, will you?—eh! eh! eh!
Flo. Will I what?
Gul. Tarry a little?
Flo. [*smiling.*] Kind Master Gullcrammer,
How can you ask me aught so unbecoming?
Gul. Oh, fie, fie, fie!—Believe me, Mistress Flora,
'Tis not for that—but being guided through
Such dreary galleries, stairs, and suites of rooms,
To this same cubicle, I'm somewhat loth
To bid adieu to pleasant company.
Flo. A flattering compliment!—In plain truth you are frighten'd.
Gul. What! frighten'd?—I—I—am not timorous.
Flo. Perhaps you've heard this is our haunted chamber?
But then it is our best—Your Reverence knows,
That in all tales which turn upon a ghost,
Your traveller belated has the luck
To enjoy the haunted room—it is a rule:—
To some it were a hardship, but to you,
Who are a scholar, and not timorous——
Gul. I did not say I was not timorous,
I said I was not temerarious.—
I'll to the hall again.
Flo. You'll do your pleasure.
But you have somehow moved my father's anger,
And you had better meet our playful Owlspiegle—
So is our goblin call'd—than face Lord Oswald.
Gul. Owlspiegle?—
It is an uncouth and outlandish name,
And in mine ear sounds fiendish.
Flo. Hush, hush, hush!
Perhaps he hears us now—(*in an under tone*)—A merry spirit;
None of your elves that pinch folks black and blue,
For lack of cleanliness.
Gul. As for that, Mistress Flora,
My taffeta doublet hath been duly brush'd,
My shirt hebdomadal put on this morning.
Flo. Why, you need fear no goblins. But this Owlspiegle
Is of another class;—yet has his frolics;
Cuts hair, trims beards, and plays amid his antics
The office of a sinful mortal barber.
Such is at least the rumour.
Gul. He will not cut my clothes, or scar my face,
Or draw my blood?
Flo. Enormities like these
Were never charged against him.
Gul. And, Mistress Flora, would you smile on me,
If, prick'd by the fond hope of your approval,
I should endure this venture?
Flo. I do hope
I shall have cause to smile.
Gul. Well! in that hope
I will embrace the achievement for thy sake. [*She is going.*
Yet, stay, stay, stay!—on second thoughts I will not—
I've thought on it, and will the mortal cudgel
Rather endure than face the ghostly razor!
Your crab-tree's tough but blunt,—your razor's polish'd,
But, as the proverb goes, 'tis cruel sharp,
I'll to thy father, and unto his pleasure
Submit these destined shoulders.
Flo. But you shall not,
Believe me, sir, you shall not; he is desperate,

And better far be trimm'd by ghost or goblin,
Than by my sire in anger; there are stores
Of hidden treasure, too, and Heaven knows what,
Buried among these ruins—you shall stay.
[*Apart.*] And if indeed there be such sprite as Owlspiegle,
And, lacking him, that thy fear plague thee not
Worse than a goblin, I have miss'd my purpose,
Which else stands good in either case.
—Good night, sir.

[*Exit, and double-locks the door.*

Gul. Nay, hold ye, hold!—Nay, gentle Mistress Flora,
Wherefore this ceremony?—She has lock'd me in,
And left me to the goblin!—[*Listening.*]—So, so, so!
I hear her light foot trip to such a distance,
That I believe the castle's breadth divides me
From human company. I'm ill at ease—
But if this citadel [*Laying his hand on his stomach*] were better victual'd,
It would be better mann'd.

[*Sits down and drinks.*

She has a footstep light, and taper ankle. [*Chuckles.*
Aha! that ankle! yet, confound it too,
But for those charms Melchisedek had been
Snug in his bed at Mucklewhame—I say,
Confound her footstep, and her instep too,
To use a cobbler's phrase.—There I was quaint.
Now, what to do in this vile circumstance,
To watch or go to bed, I can't determine;
Were I a-bed, the ghost might catch me napping,
And if I watch, my terrors will increase
As ghostly hours approach. I'll to my bed
E'en in my taffeta doublet, shrink my head
Beneath the clothes—leave the lamp burning there,

[*Sets it on the table.*

And trust to fate the issue.

[*He lays aside his cloak, and brushes it, as from habit, starting at every moment; ties a napkin over his head; then shrinks beneath the bed-clothes. He starts once or twice, and at length seems to go to sleep. A bell tolls* ONE. *He leaps up in his bed.*

Gul. I had just coax'd myself to sweet forgetfulness,
And that confounded bell—I hate all bells,
Except a dinner bell—and yet I lie, too,—
I love the bell that soon shall tell the parish
Of Gabblegoose, Melchisedek's incumbent—
And shall the future minister of Gabblegoose,
Whom his parishioners will soon require
To exorcise their ghosts, detect their witches,
Lie shivering in his bed for a pert goblin,
Whom, be he switch'd or cocktail'd, horn'd or poll'd,
A few tight Hebrew words will soon send packing?
Tush! I will rouse the parson up within me,
And bid defiance——[*A distant noise.*] In the name of Heaven,
What sounds are these!—O Lord! this comes of rashness!

[*Draws his head down under the bed-clothes.*

Duet without, between OWLSPIEGLE *and* COCKLEDEMOY.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy——

COCKLEDEMOY.

Here, father, here.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Now the pole-star's red and burning,
And the witch's spindle turning,
Appear, appear!

Gul. [*who has again raised himself, and listened with great terror to the Duet.*] I have heard of the devil's dam before,
But never of his child. Now, Heaven deliver me!
The Papists have the better of us there,—
They have their Latin prayers, cut and dried,
And pat for such occasion—I can think
On nought but the vernacular.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
We'll sport us here—

COCKLEDEMOY.

Our gambols play,
Like elve and fay;

OWLSPIEGLE.

And domineer,

BOTH.

Laugh, frolic, and frisk, till the morning appear.

COCKLEDEMOY.

Lift latch—open clasp—
Shoot bolt—and burst hasp!

[*The door opens with violence. Enter Blackthorn as Owlspiegle, fantastically dressed as a Spanish Barber, tall, thin, emaciated, and ghostly; Katleen, as Cockledemoy, attends as his Page. All their manners, tones, and motions, are fantastic, as those of Goblins. They make two or three times the circuit of the Room, without seeming to see Gullcrammer. They then resume their Chant, or Recitative.*

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
What wilt thou do that will give thee joy?
Wilt thou ride on the midnight owl?

COCKLEDEMOY.

No; for the weather is stormy and foul.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
What wilt thou do that can give thee joy?
With a needle for a sword, and a thimble for a hat,
Wilt thou fight a traverse with the castle cat?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Oh, no! she has claws, and I like not that.

Gul. I see the devil is a doting father,
And spoils his children—'tis the surest way
To make cursed imps of them. They see me not—
What will they think on next? It must be own'd,
They have a dainty choice of occupations.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
What shall we do that can give thee joy?
Shall we go seek for a cuckoo's nest?

COCKLEDEMOY.

That's best, that's best!

BOTH.

About, about,
Like an elvish scout,
The cookoo's a gull, and we'll soon find him out.

[*They search the room with mops and mows. At length Cockledemoy jumps on the bed. Gullcrammer raises himself half up, supporting himself by his hands. Cockledemoy does the same, and grins at him, then skips from the bed, and runs to Owlspiegle.*

COCKLEDEMOY.

I've found the nest,
And in it a guest,
With a sable cloak and a taffeta vest;
He must be wash'd, and trimm'd, and dress'd,
To please the eyes he loves the best.

OWLSPIEGLE.
That's best, that's best.

BOTH.
He must be shaved, and trimm'd, and dress'd,
To please the eyes he loves the best.
[*They arrange shaving things on the table, and sing as they prepare them.*

BOTH.
Know that all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

OWLSPIEGLE [*sharpening his razor*].
The sword this is made of was lost in a fray
By a fop, who first bullied and then ran away;
And the strap, from the hide of a lame racer, sold
By Lord Match, to his friend, for some hundreds in gold.

BOTH.
For all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

COCKLEDEMOY [*placing the napkin*].
And this cambric napkin, so white and so fair,
At an usurer's funeral I stole from the heir.
[*Drops something from a vial, as going to make suds.*
This dewdrop I caught from one eye of his mother,
Which wept while she ogled the parson with t'other.

BOTH.
For all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

OWLSPIEGLE [*arranging the lather and the basin.*]
My soap-ball is of the mild alkali made,
Which the soft dedicator employs in his trade;
And it froths with the pith of a promise, that's sworn
By a lover at night, and forgot on the morn.

BOTH.
For all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.
Halloo, halloo,
The blackcock crew,
Thrice shriek'd hath the owl, thrice croak'd hath the raven,
Here, ho! Master Gullcrammer, rise and be shaven!

Da capo.

Gul. [*who has been observing them.*]
I'll pluck a spirit up; they're merry goblins,
And will deal mildly. I will soothe their humour;
Besides, my beard lacks trimming.
[*He rises from his bed, and advances with great symptoms of trepidation, but affecting an air of composure. The Goblins receive him with fantastic ceremony.*
Gentlemen, 'tis your will I should be trimm'd—
E'en do your pleasure. [*They point to a seat—he sits.*]
Think, howsoe'er,
Of me as one who hates to see his blood;
Therefore I do beseech you, signior,
Be gentle in your craft. I know those barbers,
One would have harrows driven across his visnomy,
Rather than they should touch it with a razor.

OWLSPIEGLE *shaves* GULLCRAMMER, *while* COCKLEDEMOY *sings.*

Father never started hair,
Shaved too close, or left too bare—
Father's razor slips as glib
As from courtly tongue a fib.
Whiskers, mustache, he can trim in
Fashion meet to please the women;
Sharp's his blade, perfumed his lather!
Happy those are trimm'd by father!
Gul. That's a good boy. I love to hear a child

Stand for his father, if he were the devil. [*He motions to rise.*
Craving your pardon, sir.—What! sit again?
My hair lacks not your scissors.
[*Owlspiegle insists on his sitting.*
Nay, if you're peremptory, I'll ne'er dispute it,
Nor eat the cow and choke upon the tail—
E'en trim me to your fashion.
[*Owlspiegle cuts his hair, and shaves his head, ridiculously.*

COCKLEDEMOY [*sings as before*].

Hair-breadth 'scapes, and hair-breadth snares,
Hair-brain'd follies, ventures, cares,
Part when father clips your hairs.
If there is a hero frantic,
Or a lover too romantic;—
If threescore seeks second spouse,
Or fourteen lists lover's vows,
Bring them here—for a Scotch boddle,
Owlspiegle shall trim their noddle.
[*They take the napkin from about Gullcrammer's neck. He makes bows of acknowledgment, which they return fantastically, and sing—*
Thrice crow'd hath the blackcock, thrice croak'd hath the raven,
And Master Melchisedek Gullcrammer's shaven!

Gul. My friends, you are too musical for me;
But though I cannot cope with you in song,
I would, in humble prose, inquire of you,
If that you will permit me to acquit
Even with the barber's pence the barber's service?
[*They shake their heads.*
Or if there is aught else that I can do for you,
Sweet Master Owlspiegle, or your loving child,
The hopeful Cockle'moy?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Sir, you have been trimm'd of late,
Smooth's your chin, and bald your pate;
Lest cold rheums should work you harm,
Here's a cap to keep you warm.

Gul. Welcome, as Fortunatus' wishing cap,
For't was a cap that I was wishing for.
(There I was quaint in spite of mortal terror.)
[*As he puts on the cap, a pair of ass's ears disengage themselves.*
Upon my faith, it is a dainty head-dress,
And might become an alderman!—Thanks, sweet Monsieur,
Thou'rt a considerate youth.
[*Both Goblins bow with ceremony to Gullcrammer, who returns their salutation. Owlspiegle descends by the trap-door. Cockledemoy springs out at window.*

SONG [*without*].

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy, my hope, my care,
Where art thou now, O tell me where?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Up in the sky,
On the bonny dragonfly,
Come, father, come you too—
She has four wings and strength enow,
And her long body has room for two.

Gul. Cockledemoy now is a naughty brat—
Would have the poor old stiff-rump'd devil, his father,
Peril his fiendish neck. All boys are thoughtless.

SONG.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Which way didst thou take?

COCKLEDEMOY.

I have fall'n in the lake—
Help, father, for Beelzebub's sake.

Gul. The imp is drown'd—a strange death for a devil,—
O, may all boys take warning, and be civil;
Respect their loving sires, endure a chiding,
Nor roam by night on dragon-flies a-riding!

COCKLEDEMOY [*sings*].

Now merrily, merrily, row I to shore,
My bark is a bean-shell, a straw for an oar.

OWLSPIEGLE [*sings*].

My life, my joy,
My cockledemoy!

Gul. I can bear this no longer—thus children are spoil'd.
[*Strikes into the tune.*
Master Owlspiegle, hoy!
He deserves to be whipp'd little Cockledemoy!
[*Their voices are heard, as if dying away.*
Gul. They're gone!—Now, am I scared, or am I not?
I think the very desperate ecstasy
Of fear has given me courage. This is strange, now.
When they were here, I was not half so frighten'd
As now they're gone—they were a sort of company.
What a strange thing is use—A horn, a claw,
The tip of a fiend's tail, was wont to scare me.
Now am I with the devil hand and glove;
His soap has lather'd, and his razor shaved me;
I've joined him in a catch, kept time and tune,
Could dine with him, nor ask for a long spoon;
And if I keep not better company,
What will become of me when I shall die? [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Gothic Hall, waste and ruinous. The moonlight is at times seen through the shafted windows.[1]

Enter KATLEEN *and* BLACKTHORN *—They have thrown off the more ludicrous parts of their disguise.*

Kat. This way—this way; was ever fool so gull'd!
Bla. I play'd the barber better than I thought for.
Well, I've an occupation in reserve,
When the long-bow and merry musket fail me.—
But, hark ye, pretty Katleen.
Kat. What should I hearken to?
Bla. Art thou not afraid,
In these wild halls while playing feigned goblins,
That we may meet with real ones?
Kat. Not a jot.
My spirit is too light, my heart too bold,
To fear a visit from the other world.
Bla. But is not this the place, the very hall
In which men say that Oswald's grandfather,
The black Lord Erick, walks his penance round?
Credit me, Katleen, these half-moulder'd columns
Have in their ruin something very fiendish,
And, if you'll take an honest friend's advice,
The sooner that you change their shatter'd splendour
For the snug cottage that I told you of,
Believe me, it will prove the blither dwelling.
Kat. If I e'er see that cottage, honest Blackthorn,
Believe me, it shall be from other motive
Than fear of Erick's spectre.
[*A rustling sound is heard.*
Bla. I heard a rustling sound—
Upon my life, there's something in the hall,
Katleen, besides us two!
Kat. A yeoman thou,
A forester, and frighten'd! I am sorry
I gave the fool's-cap to poor Gull-crammer,
And let thy head go bare.
[*The same rustling sound is repeated.*
Bla. Why, are you mad, or hear you not the sound?
Kat. And if I do, I take small heed of it.
Will you allow a maiden to be bolder
Than you, with beard on chin and sword at girdle?
Bla. Nay, if I had my sword, I would not care;
Though I ne'er heard of master of defence,

[1] I have a notion that this can be managed so as to represent imperfect, or flitting moonlight, upon the plan of the Eidophusikon.

So active at his weapon as to brave
The devil, or a ghost—See! see! see yonder!
[*A Figure is imperfectly seen between two of the pillars.*
Kat. There's something moves, that's certain, and the moonlight,
Chased by the flitting gale, is too imperfect
To show its form; but, in the name of God,
I'll venture on it boldly.
Bla. Wilt thou so?
Were I alone, now, I were strongly tempted
To trust my heels for safety; but with thee,
Be it fiend or fairy, I'll take risk to meet it.
Kat. It stands full in our path, and we must pass it,
Or tarry here all night.
Bla. In its vile company?
[*As they advance towards the Figure, it is more plainly distinguished, which might, I think, be contrived by raising successive screens of crape. The Figure is wrapped in a long robe, like the mantle of a Hermit, or Palmer.*
Pal. Ho! ye who thread by night these wildering scenes,
In garb of those who long have slept in death,
Fear ye the company of those you imitate?
Bla. This is the devil, Katleen, let us fly! [*Runs off.*
Kat. I will not fly—why should I? My nerves shake
To look on this strange vision, but my heart
Partakes not the alarm.—If thou dost come in Heaven's name,
In Heaven's name art thou welcome!
Pal. I come, by Heaven permitted. Quit this castle:
There is a fate on't—if for good or evil,
Brief space shall soon determine. In that fate,
If good, by lineage thou canst nothing claim;
If evil, much mayst suffer.—Leave these precincts.
Kat. Whate'er thou art, be answer'd—Know, I will not
Desert the kinswoman who train'd my youth;
Know, that I will not quit my friend, my Flora;
Know, that I will not leave the aged man
Whose roof has shelter'd me. This is my resolve—
If evil come, I aid my friends to bear it,
If good, my part shall be to see them prosper,
A portion in their happiness from which
No fiend can bar me.
Pal. Maid, before thy courage,
Firm built on innocence, even beings of nature
More powerful far than thine, give place and way;
Take then this key, and wait the event with courage.
[*He drops the key.—He disappears gradually—the moonlight failing at the same time.*
Kat. [*after a pause.*] Whate'er it was, 'tis gone! My head turns round—
The blood that lately fortified my heart
Now eddies in full torrent to my brain,
And makes wild work with reason. I will haste,
If that my steps can bear me so far safe,
To living company. What if I meet it
Again in the long aisle, or vaulted passage?
And if I do, the strong support that bore me
Through this appalling interview, again
Shall strengthen and uphold me.
[*As she steps forward she stumbles over the key.*
What's this? The key?—there may be mystery in't.
I'll to my kinswoman, when this dizzy fit
Will give me leave to choose my way aright.
[*She sits down exhausted.*

Re-enter BLACKTHORN, *with a drawn sword and torch.*

Bla. Katleen! What, Katleen!—What a wretch was I

To leave her!—Katleen,—I am weapon'd now,
And fear nor dog nor devil.—She replies not!
Beast that I was—nay, worse than beast; the stag,
As timorous as he is, fights for his hind.
What's to be done?—I'll search this cursed castle
From dungeon to the battlements; if I find her not,
I'll fling me from the highest pinnacle——
Katleen [*who has somewhat gathered her spirits, in consequence of his entrance, comes behind and touches him; he starts.*] Brave sir!
I'll spare you that rash leap—You're a bold woodsman!
Surely I hope that from this night henceforward
You'll never kill a hare, since you're akin to them;
O I could laugh—but that my head's so dizzy.
Bla. Lean on me, Katleen—By my honest word,
I thought you close behind—I was surprised,
Not a jot frighten'd.
Kat. Thou art a fool to ask me to thy cottage,
And then to show me at what slight expense
Of manhood I might master thee and it.
Bla. I'll take the risk of that—This goblin business
Came rather unexpected; the best horse
Will start at sudden sights. Try me again,
And if I prove not true to bonny Katleen.
Hang me in mine own bowstring.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

The Scene returns to the Apartment at the beginning of Act Second. Oswald and Durward are discovered with Eleanor, Flora, and Leonard—Durward shuts a Prayer-book, which he seems to have been reading.

Dur. 'Tis true—the difference betwixt the churches,
Which zealots love to dwell on, to the wise
Of either flock are of far less importance
Than those great truths to which all Christian men
Subscribe with equal reverence.
Osw. We thank thee, father, for the holy office,
Still best performed when the pastor's tongue
Is echo to his breast; of jarring creeds
It ill beseems a layman's tongue to speak.—
Where have you stow'd yon prater?
[*To Flora.*
Flo. Safe in the goblin-chamber.
Ele. The goblin-chamber?
Maiden, wert thou frantic?—if his Reverence
Have suffer'd harm by waspish Owlspiegle,
Be sure thou shalt abye it.
Flo. Here he comes,
Can answer for himself!

Enter Gullcrammer, *in the fashion in which* Owlspiegle *had put him: having the fool's-cap on his head, and towel about his neck, etc. His manner through the scene is wild and extravagant, as if the fright had a little affected his brain.*

Dur. A goodly spectacle!—Is there such a goblin?
[*To Osw.*] Or has sheer terror made him such a figure?
Osw. There is a sort of wavering tradition
Of a malicious imp who teazed all strangers;
My father wont to call him Owlspiegle.
Gul. Who talks of Owlspiegle?
He is an honest fellow for a devil,
So is his son, the hopeful Cockle'moy

[*Sings.*]

"My hope, my joy,
My Cockledemoy!"

Leo. The fool's bewitch'd—the goblin hath furnish'd him

A cap which well befits his reverend wisdom.
Flo. If I could think he had lost his slender wits,
I should be sorry for the trick they play'd him.
Leo. O fear him not; it were a foul reflection
On any fiend of sense and reputation,
To filch such petty wares as his poor brains.
Dur. What saw'st thou, sir? What heard'st thou?
Gul. What was't I saw and heard?
That which old greybeards,
Who conjure Hebrew into Anglo-Saxon,
To cheat starved barons with, can little guess at.
Flo. If he begin so roundly with my father,
His madness is not like to save his bones.
Gul. Sirs, midnight came, and with it came the goblin.
I had reposed me after some brief study;
But as the soldier, sleeping in the trench,
Keeps sword and musket by him, so I had
My little Hebrew manual prompt for service.
Flo. Sausagian sows'd-face; that much of your Hebrew
Even I can bear in memory.
Gul. We counter'd.
The goblin and myself, even in mid-chamber,
And each stepp'd back a pace, as 'twere to study
The foe he had to deal with!—I bethought me,
Ghosts ne'er have the first word, and so I took it,
And fired a volley of round Greek at him.
He stood his ground, and answer'd in the Syriac;
I flank'd my Greek with Hebrew, and compell'd him—
[*A noise heard.*
Osw. Peace, idle prater!—Hark—what sounds are these?
Amid the growling of the storm without,
I hear strange notes of music, and the clash
Of coursers' trampling feet.

VOICES [*without*].
We come, dark riders of the night,
And flit before the dawning light;
Hill and valley, far aloof,
Shake to hear our chargers' hoof;
But not a foot-stamp on the green
At morn shall show where we have been.

Osw. These must be revellers belated—
Let them pass on; the ruin'd halls of Devorgoil
Open to no such guests.—
[*Flourish of trumpets at a distance, then nearer.*
They sound a summons;
What can they lack at this dead hour of night?
Look out, and see their number, and their bearing.
Leo. [*goes up to the window.*] 'Tis strange—one single shadowy form alone
Is hovering on the drawbridge—far apart
Flit through the tempest banners, horse, and riders,
In darkness lost, or dimly seen by lightning.—
Hither the figure moves—the bolts revolve—
The gate uncloses to him.
Ele. Heaven protect us!

The PALMER *enters*—GULLGRAMMER *runs off.*

Osw. Whence and what art thou? for what end come hither?
Pal. I come from a far land, where the storm howls not,
And the sun sets not, to pronounce to thee,
Oswald of Devorgoil, thy house's fate.
Dur. I charge thee, in the name we late have kneel'd to——
Pal. Abbot of Lanercost, I bid thee peace!
Uninterrupted let me do mine errand:
Baron of Devorgoil, son of the bold, the proud,
The warlike and the mighty, wherefore wear'st thou
The habit of a peasant? Tell me, wherefore
Are thy fair halls thus waste—thy chambers bare—

Where are the tapestries, where the conquer'd banners,
Trophies, and gilded arms, that deck'd the walls
Of once proud Devorgoil?

[*He advances, and places himself where the Armour hung, so as to be nearly in the centre of the Scene.*

Dur. Whoe'er thou art—if thou dost know so much,
Needs must thou know——

Osw. Peace! I will answer here; to me he spoke.—
Mysterious stranger, briefly I reply:
A peasant's dress befits a peasant's fortune;
And 'twere vain mockery to array these walls
In trophies, of whose memory nought remains,
Save that the cruelty outvied the valour
Of those who wore them.

Pal. Degenerate as thou art,
Knowst thou to whom thou says't this?

[*He drops his mantle, and is discovered armed as nearly as may be to the suit which hung on the wall; all express terror.*

Osw. It is himself—the spirit of mine Ancestor!

Eri. Tremble not, son, but hear me!

[*He strikes the wall; it opens, and discovers the Treasure Chamber.*

There lies piled
The wealth I brought from wasted Cumberland,
Enough to reinstate thy ruin'd fortunes.—
Cast from thine high-born brows that peasant bonnet,
Throw from thy noble grasp the peasant's staff,
O'er all, withdraw thine hand from that mean mate,
Whom in an hour of reckless desperation
Thy fortunes cast thee on. This do,
And be as great as ere was Devorgoil,
When Devorgoil was richest!

Dur. Lord Oswald, thou art tempted by a fiend,
Who doth assail thee on thy weakest side,—
Thy pride of lineage, and thy love of grandeur.
Stand fast—resist—contemn his fatal offers!

Ele. Urge him not, father; if the sacrifice
Of such a wasted woe-worn wretch as I am,
Can save him from the abyss of misery,
Upon whose verge he's tottering, let me wander
An unacknowledged outcast from his castle,
Even to the humble cottage I was born in.

Osw. No, Ellen, no—it is not thus they part,
Whose hearts and souls, disasters borne in common,
Have knit together, close as summer saplings
Are twined in union by the eddying tempest.—
Spirit of Erick, while thou bear'st his shape,
I'll answer with no ruder conjuration
Thy impious counsel, other than with these words,
Depart, and tempt me not!

Eri. Then fate will have her course.—Fall, massive grate,
Yield them the tempting view of these rich treasures,
But bar them from possession!

[*A portcullis falls before the door of the Treasure Chamber.*

Mortals, hear!
No hand may ope that grate, except the Heir
Of plunder'd Aglionby, whose mighty wealth,
Ravish'd in evil hour, lies yonder piled;
And not his hand prevails without the key
Of Black Lord Erick; brief space is given
To save proud Devorgoil.—So wills high Heaven.

[*Thunder; he disappears.*

Dur. Gaze not so wildly; you have stood the trial
That his commission bore, and Heaven designs,
If I may spell his will, to rescue Devorgoil
Even by the Heir of Aglionby—Behold him

In that young forester, unto whose hand
Those bars shall yield the treasures of his house,
Destined to ransom yours.—Advance, young Leonard,
And prove the adventure.
Leo. [*advances and attempts the grate.*] It is fast
As is the tower, rock-seated.
Osw. We will fetch other means, and prove its strength,
Nor starve in poverty with wealth before us.
Dur. Think what the vision spoke; The key—the fated key——

Enter GULLCRAMMER.

Gul. A key?—I say a quay is what we want,
Thus by the learn'd orthographised —Q, u, a, y.
The lake is overflow'd!—A quay, a boat,
Oars, punt, or sculler, is all one to me!—
We shall be drown'd, good people! ! !

Enter KATLEEN *and* BLACKTHORN.

Kat. Deliver us!
Haste, save yourselves—the lake is rising fast.[1]
Bla. 'T has risen my bow's height in the last five minutes,
And still is swelling strangely.
Gul. [*who has stood astonished upon seeing them.*]
We shall be drown'd without your kind assistance.
Sweet Master Owlspiegle, your dragonfly—
Your straw, your bean-stalk, gentle Cockle'moy!
Leo. [*looking from the shot-hole.*] 'Tis true, by all that's fearful! The proud lake
Peers, like ambitious tyrant, o'er his bounds,
And soon will whelm the castle—even the drawbridge
Is under water now.
Kat. Let us escape! Why stand you gazing there?
Dur. Upon the opening of that fatal grate
Depends the fearful spell that now entraps us,
The key of Black Lord Erick—ere we find it,
The castle will be whelm'd beneath the waves,
And we shall perish in it!
Kat. [*giving the key.*] Here, prove this;
A chance most strange and fearful gave it me.
Osw. [*puts it into the lock, and attempts to turn it—a loud clap of thunder.*]
Flo. The lake still rises faster.—Leonard, Leonard,
Canst thou not save us!
[*Leonard tries the lock—it opens with a violent noise, and the Portcullis rises. A loud strain of wild music.—There may be a Chorus here.*
[*Oswald enters the apartment, and brings out a scroll.*
Leo. The lake is ebbing with a wondrous haste
As late it rose—the drawbridge is left dry!
Osw. This may explain the cause.
—[*Gullcrammer offers to take it.*] But soft you, sir,
We'll not disturb your learning for the matter;
Yet, since you've borne a part in this strange drama,
You shall not go unguerdon'd. Wise or learn'd,
Modest or gentle, Heaven alone can make thee,
Being so much otherwise; but from this abundance
Thou shalt have that shall gild thine ignorance,
Exalt thy base descent, make thy presumption
Seem modest confidence, and find thee hundreds
Ready to swear that same fool's-cap of thine
Is reverend as a mitre.
Gul. Thanks, mighty baron, now no more a bare one!—
I will be quaint with him, for all his quips. [*Aside.*
Osw. Nor shall kind Katleen lack
Her portion in our happiness.
Kat. Thanks, my good lord, but Katleen's fate is fix'd—
There is a certain valiant forester,
Too much afear'd of ghosts to sleep anights

[1] If it could be managed to render the rising of the lake visible, it would answer well for a *Coup de théâtre.*

In his lone cottage, without one to guard him.—
Leo. If I forget my comrade's faithful friendship,
May I be lost to fortune, hope, and love!
Dur. Peace, all! and hear the blessing which this scroll
Speaks unto faith, and constancy, and virtue.
No more this castle's troubled guest,
Dark Erick's spirit hath found rest.
The storms of angry Fate are past—
For Constancy defies their blast.
Of Devorgoil the daughter free
Shall wed the Heir of Aglionby;
Nor ever more dishonour soil
The rescued house of Devorgoil!

AUCHINDRANE; OR, THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

John Mure of Auchindrane, *an Ayrshire Baron. He has been a follower of the Regent, Earl of Morton, during the Civil Wars, and hides an oppressive, ferocious, and unscrupulous disposition, under some pretences to strictness of life and doctrine, which, however, never influence his conduct. He is in danger from the law, owing to his having been formerly active in the assassination of the Earl of Cassilis.*

Philip Mure, *his Son, a wild, debauched Profligate, professing and practising a contempt for his Father's hypocrisy, while h is as fierce and licentious as Auchindrane himself.*

Gifford, *their Relation, a Courtier.*

Quentin Blane, *a Youth, educated for a Clergyman, but sent by Auchindrane to serve in a Band of Auxiliaries in the Wars of the Netherlands, and lately employed as Clerk or Comptroller to the Regiment—Disbanded, however, and on his return to his native Country. He is of a mild, gentle, and rather feeble character, liable to be influenced by any person of stronger mind who will take the trouble to direct him. He is somewhat of a nervous temperament, varying from sadness to gaiety, according to the impulse of the moment; an amiable hypochondriac.*

Hildebrand, *a stout old Englishman, who, by feats of courage, has raised himself to the rank of Sergeant-Major (then of greater consequence than at present). He, too, has been disbanded, but cannot bring himself to believe that he has lost his command over his Regiment.*

Abraham, Williams, Jenkin, *And Others,* — *Privates dismissed from the same Regiment in which Quentin and Hildebrand had served. These are mutinous, and are much disposed to remember former quarrels with their late Officers.*

Niel MacLellan, *Keeper of Auchindrane Forest and Game.*

Earl of Dunbar, *commanding an Army as Lieutenant of James I., for execution of Justice on Offenders.*

Guards, Attendants, etc., etc.

Marion, *Wife of* Niel MacLellan.

Isabel, *their Daughter, a Girl of six years old.*

Other Children and Peasant Women.

ACT I.—Scene I.

A rocky Bay on the Coast of Carrick, in Ayrshire, not far from the Point of Turnberry. The Sea comes in upon a bold rocky Shore. The remains of a small half-ruined Tower are seen on the right hand, overhanging the Sea. There is a Vessel at a distance in the offing. A Boat at the bottom of the Stage lands eight or ten Persons, dressed like disbanded, and in one or

two cases like disabled Soldiers. They come straggling forward with their knapsacks and bundles. HILDEBRAND, the Sergeant, belonging to the Party, a stout elderly man, stands by the boat, as if superintending the disembarkation. QUENTIN remains apart.

Abraham. Farewell, the flats of Holland, and right welcome
The cliffs of Scotland! Fare thee well, black beer
And Schiedam gin! and welcome twopenny,
Oatcakes, and usquebaugh!
Williams [*who wants an arm.*] Farewell, the gallant field, and "Forward, pikemen!"
For the bridge-end, the suburb, and the lane;
And, "Bless your honour, noble gentleman,
Remember a poor soldier!"
Abr. My tongue shall never need to smooth itself
To such poor sounds, while it can boldly say,
"Stand and deliver!"
Wil. Hush, the sergeant hears you!
Abr. And let him hear; he makes a bustle yonder,
And dreams of his authority, forgetting
We are disbanded men, o'er whom his halberd
Has not such influence as the beadle's baton.
We are no soldiers now, but every one
The lord of his own person.
Wil. A wretched lordship—and our freedom such
As that of the old cart-horse, when the owner
Turns him upon the common. I for one
Will still continue to respect the sergeant,
And the comptroller, too,—while the cash lasts.
Abr. I scorn them both. I am too stout a Scotsman
To bear a Southron's rule an instant longer
Than discipline obliges; and for Quentin,
Quentin the quillman, Quentin the comptroller,
We have no regiment now; or, if we had,
Quentin's no longer clerk to it.
Wil. For shame! for shame! What, shall old comrades jar thus,
And on the verge of parting, and for ever?—
Nay, keep thy temper, Abraham, though a bad one.—
Good Master Quentin, let thy song last night
Give us once more our welcome to old Scotland.
Abr. Ay, they sing light whose task is telling money,
When dollars clink for chorus.
Que. I've done with counting silver, honest Abraham,
As thou, I fear, with pouching thy small share on't.
But lend your voices, lads, and I will sing
As blithely yet as if a town were won;
As if upon a field of battle gain'd,
Our banners waved victorious.
[*He sings, and the rest bear chorus.*

SONG

Hither we come,
Once slaves to the drum,
But no longer we list to its rattle;
Adieu to the wars,
With their slashes and scars,
The march, and the storm, and the battle.

There are some of us maim'd,
And some that are lamed,
And some of old aches are complaining;
But we'll take up the tools,
Which we flung by like fools,
'Gainst Don Spaniard to go a-campaigning.

Dick Hathorn doth vow
To return to the pough,
Jack Steele to his anvil and hammer;
The weaver shall find room
At the wight-wapping loom,
And your clerk shall teach writing and grammar.

Abr. And this is all that thou canst do, gay Quentin?
To swagger o'er a herd of parish brats,

Cut cheese or dibble onions with thy poniard,
And turn the sheath into a ferula?
Que. I am the prodigal in holy writ;
I cannot work,—to beg I am ashamed.
Besides, good mates, I care not who may know it,
I'm e'en as fairly tired of this same fighting,
As the poor cur that's worried in the shambles
By all the mastiff dogs of all the butchers;
Wherefore, farewell sword, poniard, petronel,
And welcome poverty and peaceful labour.
Abr. Clerk Quentin, if of fighting thou art tired,
By my good word, thou'rt quickly satisfied,
For thou'st seen but little on't.
Wil. Thou dost belie him—I have seen him fight
Bravely enough for one in his condition.
Abr. What he? that counter-casting, smock-faced boy?
What was he but the colonel's scribbling drudge,
With men of straw to stuff the regiment roll;
With cipherings unjust to cheat his comrades,
And cloak false musters for our noble captain?
He bid farewell to sword and petronel!
He should have said, farewell my pen and standish.
These, with the rosin used to hide erasures,
Were the best friends he left in camp behind him.
Que. The sword you scoff at is not far, but scorns
The threats of an unmanner'd mutineer.
Ser. [*interposes.*] We'll have no brawling—Shall it e'er be said,
That being comrades six long years together,
While gulping down the frowsy fogs of Holland,
We tilted at each other's throats so soon
As the first draught of native air refresh'd them?
No! by Saint Dunstan, I forbid the combat.
You all, methinks, do know this trusty halberd;
For I opine, that every back amongst you
Hath felt the weight of the tough ashen staff,
Endlong or overthwart. Who is it wishes
A remembrancer now?
[*Raises his halberd.*
Abr. Comrades, have you ears
To hear the old man bully? Eyes to see
His staff rear'd o'er your heads, as o'er the hounds
The huntsman cracks his whip?
Wil. Well said—stout Abraham has the right on't.—
I tell thee, sergeant, we do reverence thee,
And pardon the rash humours thou hast caught,
Like wiser men, from thy authority.
'Tis ended, howsoe'er, and we'll not suffer
A word of sergeantry, or halberd-staff,
Nor the most petty threat of discipline.
If thou wilt lay aside thy pride of office,
And drop thy wont of swaggering and commanding,
Thou art our comrade still for good or evil.
Else take thy course apart, or with the clerk there—
A sergeant thou, and he being all thy regiment.
Ser. Is't come to this, false knaves? And think you not,
That if you bear a name o'er other soldiers,
It was because you follow'd to the charge
One that had zeal and skill enough to lead you
Where fame was won by danger?
Wil. We grant thy skill in leading, noble sergeant;
Witness some empty boots and sleeves amongst us,
Which else had still been tenanted with limbs
In the full quantity; and for the arguments

With which you used to back our resolution,
Our shoulders do record them. At a word,
Will you conform, or must we part our company?
Ser. Conform to you? Base dogs! I would not lead you
A bolt-flight farther to be made a general.
Mean mutineers! when you swill'd off the dregs
Of my poor sea-stores, it was, "Noble Sergeant—
Heaven bless old Hildebrand—we'll follow him,
At least, until we safely see him lodged
Within the merry bounds of his own England!"
Wil. Ay, truly, sir; but, mark, the ale was mighty,
And the Geneva potent. Such stout liquor
Makes violent protestations. Skink it round,
If you have any left, to the same tune,
And we may find a chorus for it still.
Abr. We lose our time.—Tell us at once, old man,
If thou wilt march with us, or stay with Quentin?
Ser. Out, mutineers! Dishonour dog your heels!
Abr. Wilful will have his way. Adieu, stout Hildebrand!
[*The Soldiers go off laughing, and taking leave, with mockery, of the Sergeant and Quentin, who remain on the Stage.*
Ser. [*after a pause.*] Fly you not with the rest—fail you to follow
Yon goodly fellowship and fair example?
Come, take your wild-goose flight. I know you Scots,
Like your own sea-fowl, seek your course together.
Que. Faith, a poor heron I, who wing my flight
In loneliness, or with a single partner;
And right it is that I should seek for solitude,
Bringing but evil luck on them I herd with.
Ser. Thou'rt thankless. Had we landed on the coast,
Where our course bore us, thou wert far from home;
But the fierce wind that drove us round the island,
Barring each port and inlet that we aim'd at,
Hath wafted thee to harbour; for I judge
This is thy native land we disembark on.
Que. True, worthy friend. Each rock, each stream I look on,
Each bosky wood, and every frowning tower,
Awakens some young dream of infancy.
Yet such is my hard hap, I might more safely
Have look'd on Indian cliffs, or Afric's desert,
Than on my native shores. I'm like a babe,
Doom'd to draw poison from my nurse's bosom.
Ser. Thou dream'st, young man. Unreal terrors haunt,
As I have noted, giddy brains like thine—
Flighty, poetic, and imaginative—
To whom a minstrel whim gives idle rapture,
And, when it fades, fantastic misery.
Que. But mine is not fantastic. I can tell thee,
Since I have known thee still my faithful friend,
In part at least the dangerous plight I stand in.
Ser. And I will hear thee willingly, the rather
That I would let these vagabonds march on,
Nor join their troop again. Besides, good sooth,
I'm wearied with the toil of yesterday,
And revel of last night.—And I may aid thee,
Yes, I may aid thee, comrade, and perchance
Thou mayst advantage me.
Que. May it prove well for both! —But note, my friend,
I can but intimate my mystic story.
Some of it lies so secret,—even the winds
That whistle round us must not know the whole—
An oath!—an oath!——

Ser. That must be kept, of course.
I ask but that which thou mayst freely tell.
Que. I was an orphan boy, and first saw light
Not far from where we stand—my lineage low,
But honest in its poverty. A lord,
The master of the soil for many a mile,
Dreaded and powerful, took a kindly charge
For my advance in letters, and the qualities
Of the poor orphan lad drew some applause.
The knight was proud of me, and, in his halls,
I had such kind of welcome as the great
Give to the humble, whom they love to point to
As objects not unworthy their protection,
Whose progress is some honour to their patron—
A cure was spoken of, which I might serve,
My manners, doctrine, and acquirements fitting.
Ser. Hitherto thy luck
Was of the best, good friend. Few lords had cared
If thou couldst read thy grammar or thy psalter.
Thou hadst been valued couldst thou scour a harness,
And dress a steed distinctly.
Que. My old master
Held different doctrine, at least it seem'd so—
But he was mix'd in many a deadly feud—
And here my tale grows mystic. I became,
Unwitting and unwilling, the depositary
Of a dread secret, and the knowledge on't
Has wreck'd my peace for ever. It became
My patron's will, that I, as one who knew
More than I should, must leave the realm of Scotland,
And live or die within a distant land.
Ser. Ah! thou hast done a fault in some wild raid,
As you wild Scotsmen call them.
Que. Comrade, nay;
Mine was a peaceful part, and happ'd by chance.
I must not tell you more. Enough, my presence
Brought danger to my benefactor's house.
Tower after tower conceal'd me, willing still
To hide my ill-omen'd face with owls and ravens,
And let my patron's safety be the purchase
Of my severe and desolate captivity.
So thought I, when dark Arran, with its walls
Of native rock, enclosed me. There I lurk'd,
A peaceful stranger amid armed clans,
Without a friend to love or to defend me,
Where all beside were link'd by close alliances.
At length I made my option to take service
In that same legion of auxiliaries
In which we lately served the Belgian.
Our leader, stout Montgomery, hath been kind
Through full six years of warfare, and assign'd me
More peaceful tasks than the rough front of war,
For which my education little suited me.
Ser. Ay, therein was Montgomery kind indeed;
Nay, kinder than you think, my simple Quentin.
The letters which you brought to the Montgomery,
Pointed to thrust thee on some desperate service,
Which should most likely end thee.
Que. Bore I such letters?—Surely, comrade, no.
Full deeply was the writer bound to aid me.
Perchance he only meant to prove my mettle;
And it was but a trick of my bad fortune
That gave his letters ill interpretation.
Ser. Ay, but thy better angel wrought for good,

Whatever ill thy evil fate designed thee.
Montgomery pitied thee, and changed thy service
In the rough field for labour in the tent,
More fit for thy green years and peaceful habits.
Que. Even there his well-meant kindness injured me.
My comrades hated, undervalued me,
And whatsoe'er of service I could do them,
They guerdon'd with ingratitude and envy—
Such my strange doom, that if I serve a man
At deepest risk, he is my foe for ever!
Ser. Hast thou worse fate than others if it were so?
Worse even than me, thy friend, thine officer,
Whom yon ungrateful slaves have pitch'd ashore,
As wild waves heap the sea-weed on the beach,
And left him here, as if he had the pest
Or leprosy, and death were in his company?
Que. They think at least you have the worst of plagues,
The worst of leprosies,—they think you poor.
Ser. They think like lying villains then, I'm rich,
And they too might have felt it. I've a thought—
But stay—what plans your wisdom for yourself?
Que. My thoughts are wellnigh desperate. But I purpose
Return to my stern patron—there to tell him
That wars, and winds, and waves, have cross'd his pleasure,
And cast me on the shore from whence he banish'd me.
Then let him do his will, and destine for me
A dungeon or a grave.
Ser. Now, by the rood, thou art a simple fool!
I can do better for thee. Mark me, Quentin.
I took my licence from the noble regiment,
Partly that I was worn with age and warfare,
Partly that an estate of yeomanry,
Of no great purchase, but enough to live on,
Has call'd me owner since a kinsman's death.
It lies in merry Yorkshire, where the wealth
Of fold and furrow, proper to Old England,
Stretches by streams which walk no sluggish pace,
But dance as light as yours. Now, good friend Quentin,
This copyhold can keep two quiet inmates,
And I am childless. Wilt thou be my son?
Que. Nay, you can only jest, my worthy friend!
What claim have I to be a burden to you?
Ser. The claim of him that wants, and is in danger,
On him that has, and can afford protection:
Thou wouldst not fear a foeman in my cottage,
Where a stout mastiff slumber'd on the hearth,
And this good halberd hung above the chimney?
But come—I have it—thou shalt earn thy bread
Duly, and honourably, and usefully.
Our village schoolmaster hath left the parish,
Forsook the ancient schoolhouse with its yew-trees,
That lurk'd beside a church two centuries older,—
So long devotion took the lead of knowledge;
And since his little flock are shepherdless,
'Tis thou shalt be promoted in his room;
And rather than thou wantest scholars, man,
Myself will enter pupil. Better late,
Our proverb says, than never to do well.
And look you, on the holydays I'd tell
To all the wondering boors and gaping children,
Strange tales of what the regiment did in Flanders,

And thou shouldst say Amen, and be my warrant,
That I speak truth to them.
Que. Would I might take thy offer! But, alas!
Thou art the hermit who compell'd a pilgrim,
In name of Heaven and heavenly charity,
To share his roof and meal, but found too late
That he had drawn a curse on him and his,
By sheltering a wretch foredoom'd of heaven!
Ser. Thou talk'st in riddles to me.
Que. If I do,
'Tis that I am a riddle to myself.
Thou know'st I am by nature born a friend
To glee and merriment; can make wild verses;
The jest or laugh has never stopp'd with me,
When once 'twas set a rolling.
Ser. I have known thee
A blithe companion still, and wonder now
Thou shouldst become thus crest-fallen.
Que. Does the lark sing her descant when the falcon
Scales the blue vault with bolder wing than hers,
And meditates a stoop? The mirth thou'st noted
Was all deception, fraud—Hated enough
For other causes, I did veil my feelings
Beneath the mask of mirth,—laugh'd, sung, and caroll'd,
To gain some interest in my comrades' bosoms,
Although mine own was bursting.
Ser. Thou'rt a hypocrite
Of a new order.
Que. But harmless as the innoxious snake,
Which bears the adder's form, lurks in his haunts,
Yet neither hath his fang-teeth nor his poison.
Look you, kind Hildebrand, I would seem merry,
Lest other men should, tiring of my sadness,
Expel me from them, as the hunted wether
Is driven from the flock.
Ser. Faith, thou hast borne it bravely out.
Had I been ask'd to name the merriest fellow
Of all our muster-roll—that man wert thou.
Que. See'st thou, my friend, yon brook dance down the valley,
And sing blithe carols over broken rock
And tiny waterfall, kissing each shrub
And each gay flower it nurses in its passage,—
Where, think'st thou, is its source, the bonny brook?—
It flows from forth a cavern, black and gloomy,
Sullen and sunless, like this heart of mine,
Which others see in a false glare of gaiety,
Which I have laid before you in its sadness.
Ser. If such wild fancies dog thee, wherefore leave
The trade where thou wert safe 'midst others' dangers,
And venture to thy native land, where fate
Lies on the watch for thee? Had old Montgomery
Been with the regiment, thou hadst had no congé.
Que. No, 'tis most likely—But I had a hope,
A poor vain hope, that I might live obscurely
In some far corner of my native Scotland,
Which, of all others, splinter'd into districts,
Differing in manners, families, even language,
Seem'd a safe refuge for the humble wretch,
Whose highest hope was to remain unheard of.
But fate has baffled me—the winds and waves,
With force resistless, have impell'd me hither—
Have driven me to the clime most dang'rous to me;
And I obey the call, like the hurt deer,
Which seeks instinctively his native lair,

Though his heart tells him it is but to die there.
Ser. 'Tis false, by Heaven, young man! This same despair,
Though showing resignation in its banner,
Is but a kind of covert cowardice.
Wise men have said, that though our stars incline,
They cannot force us—Wisdom is the pilot,
And if he cannot cross, he may evade them.
You lend an ear to idle auguries,
The fruits of our last revels—still most sad
Under the gloom that follows boisterous mirth,
As earth looks blackest after brilliant sunshine.
Que. No, by my honest word. I join'd the revel,
And aided it with laugh, and song, and shout,
But my heart revell'd not; and, when the mirth
Was at the loudest, on yon galliot's prow
I stood unmark'd, and gazed upon the land,
My native land—each cape and cliff I knew.
"Behold me now," I said, "your destined victim!"
So greets the sentenced criminal the headsman,
Who slow approaches with his lifted axe.
"Hither I come," I said, "ye kindred hills,
Whose darksome outline in a distant land
Haunted by slumbers; here I stand, thou ocean,
Whose hoarse voice, murmuring in my dreams, required me;
See me now here, ye winds, whose plaintive wail,
On yonder distant shores, appear'd to call me—
Summon'd, behold me." And the winds and waves,
And the deep echoes of the distant mountain,
Made answer—"Come, and die!"
Ser. Fantastic all! Poor boy, thou art distracted
With the vain terrors of some feudal tyrant,
Whose frown hath been from infancy thy bugbear.
Why seek his presence?
Que. Wherefore does the moth
Fly to the scorching taper? Why the bird,
Dazzled by lights at midnight, seek the net?
Why does the prey, which feels the fascination
Of the snake's glaring eye, drop in his jaws?
Ser. Such wild examples but refute themselves.
Let bird, let moth, let the coil'd adder's prey,
Resist the fascination and be safe.
Thou goest not near this Baron—if thou goest,
I will go with thee. Known in many a field,
Which he in a whole life of petty feud
Has never dream'd of, I will teach the knight
To rule him in this matter—be thy warrant,
That far from him, and from his petty lordship,
You shall henceforth tread English land, and never
Thy presence shall alarm his conscience more.
Que. 'Twere desperate risk for both. I will far rather
Hastily guide thee through this dangerous province,
And seek thy school, thy yew-trees, and thy churchyard;—
The last, perchance, will be the first I find.
Ser. I would rather face him,
Like a bold Englishman that knows his right,
And will stand by his friend. And yet 'tis folly—
Fancies like these are not to be resisted;
'Tis better to escape them. Many a presage,
Too rashly braved, becomes its own accomplishment.
Then let us go—but whither? My old head
As little knows where it shall lie to-night,
As yonder mutineers that left their officer,

As reckless of his quarters as these billows,
That leave the withered sea-weed on the beach,
And care not where they pile it.
Que. Think not for that, good friend. We are in Scotland,
And if it is not varied from its wont,
Each cot, that sends a curl of smoke to heaven,
Will yield a stranger quarters for the night,
Simply because he needs them.
Ser. But are there none within an easy walk
Give lodgings here for hire? for I have left
Some of the Don's piastres (though I kept
The secret from yon gulls), and I had rather
Pay the fair reckoning I can well afford,
And my host takes with pleasure, than I'd cumber
Some poor man's roof with me and all my wants,
And tax his charity beyond discretion.
Que. Some six miles hence there is a town and hostelry—
But you are wayworn, and it is most likely
Our comrades must have fill'd it.
Ser. Out upon them!—
Were there a friendly mastiff who would lend me
Half of his supper, half of his poor kennel,
I would help Honesty to pick his bones,
And share his straw, far rather than I'd sup
On jolly fare with these base varlets!
Que. We'll manage better; for our Scottish dogs,
Though stout and trusty, are but ill-instructed
In hospitable rights.—Here is a maiden,
A little maid, will tell us of the country,
And sorely it is changed since I have left it,
If we should fail to find a harbourage.

Enter ISABEL MACLELLAN, *a girl of about six years old, bearing a milk-pail on her head; she stops on seeing the* SERGEANT *and* QUENTIN.

Que. There's something in her look that doth remind me—
But 'tis not wonder I find recollections
In all that here I look on.—Pretty maid—
Ser. You're slow, and hesitate. I will be spokesman.—
Good even, my pretty maid—canst thou tell us,
Is there a Christian house would render strangers,
For love or guerdon, a night's meal and lodging?
Isa. Full surely, sir; we dwell in yon old house
Upon the cliff—they call it Chapeldonan. [*Points to the building.*
Our house is large enough, and if our supper
Chance to be scant, you shall have half of mine,
For, as I think, sir, you have been a soldier.
Up yonder lies our house; I'll trip before,
And tell my mother she has guests a-coming;
The path is something steep, but you shall see
I'll be there first. I must chain up the dogs, too;
Nimrod and Bloodylass are cross to strangers,
But gentle when you know them.
[*Exit, and is seen partially ascending to the Castle.*
Ser. You have spoke
Your country folk aright, both for the dogs
And for the people.—We had luck to light
On one too young for cunning and for selfishness.—
He's in a reverie—a deep one sure,
Since the gibe on his country wakes him not.—
Bestir thee, Quentin!
Que. 'Twas a wondrous likeness.
Ser. Likeness! of whom? I'll warrant thee of one
Whom thou hast loved and lost. Such fantasies
Live long in brains like thine, which fashion visions

Of woe and death when they are cross'd in love,
As most men are or have been.
Que. Thy guess hath touch'd me, though it is but slightly,
'Mongst other woes: I knew, in former days,
A maid that view'd me with some glance of favour;
But my fate carried me to other shores,
And she has since been wedded. I did think on't
But as a bubble burst, a rainbow vanish'd;
It adds no deeper shade to the dark gloom
Which chills the springs of hope and life within me.
Our guide hath got a trick of voice and feature
Like to the maid I spoke of—that is all.
Ser. She bounds before us like a gamesome doe,
Or rather as the rock-bred eaglet soars
Up to her nest, as if she rose by will
Without an effort. Now a Netherlander,
One of our Frogland friends, viewing the scene,
Would take his oath that tower, and rock, and maiden,
Were forms too light and lofty to be real,
And only some delusion of the fancy,
Such as men dream at sunset. I myself
Have kept the level ground so many years,
I have wellnigh forgot the art to climb,
Unless assisted by thy younger arm.
[*They go off as if to ascend to the Tower, the Sergeant leaning upon Quentin.*

Scene II.

Scene changes to the Front of the Old Tower. Isabel comes forward with her Mother,—Marion speaking as they advance.

Mar. I blame thee not, my child, for bidding wanderers
Come share our food and shelter, if thy father
Were here to welcome them; but, Isabel,
He waits upon his lord at Auchindrane,
And comes not home to-night.
Isa. What then, my mother?
The travellers do not ask to see my father;
Food, shelter, rest, is all the poor men want,
And we can give them these without my father.
Mar. Thou canst not understand, nor I explain,
Why a lone female asks not visitants
What time her husband's absent.—[*Apart.*] My poor child,
And if thou'rt wedded to a jealous husband,
Thou'lt know too soon the cause.
Isa. [*partly overhearing what her mother says.*] Ay, but I know already—Jealousy
Is, when my father chides, and you sit weeping.
Mar. Out, little spy! thy father never chides;
Or, if he does, 'tis when his wife deserves it.—
But to our strangers; they are old men, Isabel,
That seek this shelter? are they not?
Isa. One is old—
Old as this tower of ours, and worn like that,
Bearing deep marks of battles long since fought.
Mar. Some remnant of the wars; he's welcome, surely,
Bringing no quality along with him
Which can alarm suspicion.—Well, the other?
Isa. A young man, gentle-voiced and gentle-eyed,
Who looks and speaks like one the world has frown'd on;
But smiles when you smile, seeming that he feels
Joy in your joy, though he himself is sad.
Brown hair, and downcast looks.
Mar. [*alarmed.*] 'Tis but an idle thought—it cannot be!
[*Listens.*
I hear his accents—It is all too true—
My terrors were prophetic!
I'll compose myself,

And then accost him firmly. Thus it must be.
[*She retires hastily into the Tower.*
[*The voices of the Sergeant and Quentin are heard ascending behind the Scenes.*
Que. One effort more—we stand upon the level.
I've seen thee work thee up glacis and cavalier
Steeper than this ascent, when cannon, culverine,
Musket, and hackbut, shower'd their shot upon thee,
And form'd, with ceaseless blaze, a fiery garland
Round the defences of the post you storm'd.
[*They come on the Stage, and at the same time Marion re-enters from the Tower.*
Ser. Truly thou speak'st. I am the tardier,
That I, in climbing hither, miss the fire,
Which wont to tell me there was death in loitering.—
Here stands, methinks, our hostess.
[*He goes forward to address Marion. Quentin, struck on seeing her, keeps back.*
Ser. Kind dame, yon little lass hath brought you strangers,
Willing to be a trouble, not a charge to you.
We are disbanded soldiers, but have means
Ample enough to pay our journey homeward.
Mar. We keep no house of general entertainment,
But know our duty, sir, to locks like yours,
Whiten'd and thinn'd by many a long campaign.
Ill chances that my husband should be absent—
[*Apart.*]—Courage alone can make me struggle through it—
For in your comrade, though he hath forgot me,
I spy a friend whom I have known in school-days,
And whom I think MacLellan well remembers.
[*She goes up to Quentin.*
You see a woman's memory
Is faithfuller than yours; for Quentin Blane
Hath not a greeting left for Marion Harkness.
Que. [*with effort.*] I seek, indeed, my native land, good Marion,
But seek it like a stranger.—All is changed,
And thou thyself—
Mar. You left a giddy maiden,
And find, on your return, a wife and mother.
Thine old acquaintance, Quentin, is my mate—
Stout Niel MacLellan, ranger to our lord,
The Knight of Auchindrane. He's absent now,
But will rejoice to see his former comrade,
If, as I trust, you tarry his return.
[*Apart.*] Heaven grant he understand my words by contraries!
He must remember Niel and he were rivals;
He must remember Niel and he were foes;
He must remember Niel is warm of temper,
And think, instead of welcome, I would blithely
Bid him, God speed you. But he is as simple
And void of guile as ever.
Que. Marion, I gladly rest within your cottage,
And gladly wait return of Niel MacLellan,
To clasp his hand, and wish him happiness.
Some rising feelings might perhaps prevent this—
But 'tis a peevish part to grudge our friends
Their share of fortune because we have miss'd it;
I can wish others joy and happiness,
Though I must ne'er partake them.
Mar. But if it grieve you—
Que Nò! do not fear. The brightest gleams of hope
That shine on me are such as are reflected
From those which shine on others.
[*The Sergeant and Quentin enter the Tower with the little Girl.*
Mar. [*comes forward, and speaks in agitation.*] Even so! the simple youth has miss'd my meaning.
I shame to make it plainer, or to say,

In one brief word, Pass on—Heaven guide the bark,
For we are on the breakers!
[Exit into the Tower.

ACT II.—Scene I.

A withdrawing Apartment in the Castle of Auchindrane. Servants place a Table, with a Flask of Wine and Drinking-Cups.

Enter Mure *of* Auchindrane, *with* Albert Gifford, *his Relation and Visitor. They place themselves by the Table after some complimentary ceremony. At some distance is heard the noise of revelling.*

Auch. We're better placed for confidential talk,
Than in the hall fill'd with disbanded soldiers,
And fools and fiddlers gather'd on the highway,—
The worthy guests whom Philip crowds my hall with,
And with them spends his evening.
Gif. But think you not, my friend, that your son Philip
Should be participant of these our councils,
Being so deeply mingled in the danger—
Your house's only heir—your only son?
Auch. Kind cousin Gifford, if thou lack'st good counsel
At race, at cockpit, or at gambling table,
Or any freak by which men cheat themselves
As well of life, as of the means to live,
Call for assistance upon Philip Mure;
But in all serious parley spare invoking him.
Gif. You speak too lightly of my cousin Philip;
All name him brave in arms.
Auch. A second Bevis;
But I, my youth bred up in graver fashions,
Mourn o'er the mode of life in which he spends,
Or rather dissipates, his time and substance.
No vagabond escapes his search—The soldier
Spurn'd from the service, henceforth to be ruffian
Upon his own account, is Philip's comrade;
The fiddler, whose crack'd crowd has still three strings on't;
The balladeer, whose voice has still two notes left;
Whate'er is roguish and whate'er is vile,
Are welcome to the board of Auchindrane,
And Philip will return them shout for shout,
And pledge for jovial pledge, and song for song,
Until the shamefaced sun peep at our windows,
And ask, "What have we here?"
Gif. You take such revel deeply—we are Scotsmen,
Far known for rustic hospitality,
That mind not birth or titles in our guests;
The harper has his seat beside our hearth,
The wanderer must find comfort at our board,
His name unask'd, his pedigree unknown;
So did our ancestors, and so must we.
Auch. All this is freely granted, worthy kinsman;
And prithee do not think me churl enough
To count how many sit beneath my salt.
I've wealth enough to fill my father's hall
Each day at noon, and feed the guests who crowd it.
I am near mate with those whom men call Lord,
Though a rude western knight. But mark me, cousin,
Although I feed wayfaring vagabonds,
I make them not my comrades. Such as I,
Who have advanced the fortunes of my line,
And swell'd a baron's turret to a palace,
Have oft the curse awaiting on our thrift,
To see, while yet we live, the things which must be
At our decease—the downfall of our family,

The loss of land and lordship, name and knighthood,
The wreck of the fair fabric we have built,
By a degenerate heir. Philip has that
Of inborn meanness in him, that he loves not
The company of betters, nor of equals;
Never at ease, unless he bears the bell,
And crows the loudest in the company.
He's mesh'd, too, in the snares of every female
Who deigns to cast a passing glance on him—
Licentious, disrespectful, rash, and profligate.

Gif. Come, my good coz, think we too have been young,
And I will swear that in your father's lifetime
You have yourself been trapp'd by toys like these.

Auch. A fool I may have been—but not a madman;
I never play'd the rake among my followers,
Pursuing this man's sister, that man's wife;
And therefore never saw I man of mine,
When summon'd to obey my hest, grow restive,
Talk of his honour, of his peace destroy'd,
And, while obeying, mutter threats of vengeance.
But now the humour of an idle youth,
Disgusting trusted followers, sworn dependants,
Plays football with his honour and my safety.

Gif. I'm sorry to find discord in your house,
For I had hoped, while bringing you cold news,
To find you arm'd in union 'gainst the danger.

Auch. What can man speak that I would shrink to hear,
And where the danger I would deign to shun? [*He rises.*
What should appal a man inured to perils,
Like the bold climber on the crags of Ailsa?
Winds whistle past him, billows rage below,
The sea-fowl sweep around, with shriek and clang,
One single slip, one unadvised pace,
One qualm of giddiness—and peace be with him!
But he whose grasp is sure, whose step is firm,
Whose brain is constant—he makes one proud rock
The means to scale another, till he stand
Triumphant on the peak.

Gif. And so I trust
Thou wilt surmount the danger now approaching,
Which scarcely can I frame my tongue to tell you,
Though I rode here on purpose.

Auch. Cousin, I think thy heart was never coward,
And strange it seems thy tongue should take such semblance.
I've heard of many a loud-mouth'd, noisy braggart,
Whose hand gave feeble sanction to his tongue;
But thou art one whose heart can think bold things,
Whose hand can act them—but who shrinks to speak them!

Gif. And if I speak them not, 'tis that I shame
To tell thee of the calúmnies that load thee.
Things loudly spoken at the city Cross—
Things closely whisper'd in our Sovereign's ear—
Things which the plumed lord and flat-capp'd citizen
Do circulate amid their different ranks—
Things false, no doubt; but, falsehoods while I deem them,
Still honouring thee, I shun the odious topic.

Auch. Shun it not, cousin; 'tis a friend's best office
To bring the news we hear unwillingly.
The sentinel, who tells the foe's approach,
And wakes the sleeping camp, does but his duty:
Be thou as bold in telling me of danger,
As I shall be in facing danger told of.

Gif. I need not bid thee recollect
the death-feud
That raged so long betwixt thy
house and Cassilis;
I need not bid thee recollect the
league,
When royal James himself stood
mediator
Between thee and Earl Gilbert.
Auch. Call you these news?—
You might as well have told me
That old King Coil is dead, and
graved at Kylesfeld.
I'll help thee out—King James
commanded us
Henceforth to live in peace, made
us clasp hands too.
O, sir, when such an union hath been
made,
In heart and hand conjoining mortal
foes,
Under a monarch's royal mediation,
The league is not forgotten. And
with this
What is there to be told? The king
commanded—
"Be friends." No doubt we were
so—Who dare doubt it?
Gif. You speak but half the tale.
Auch. By good Saint Trimon,
but I'll tell the whole!
There is no terror in the tale for
me—
Go speak of ghosts to children!—
This Earl Gilbert
(God sain him) loved Heaven's
peace as well as I did,
And we were wondrous friends
whene'er we met
At church or market, or in burrows
town.
Midst this, our good Lord Gilbert,
Earl of Cassilis,
Takes purpose he would journey
forth to Edinburgh.
The King was doling gifts of abbey-
lands,
Good things that thrifty house was
wont to fish for.
Our mighty Earl forsakes his sea-
wash'd castle,
Passes our borders some four miles
from hence;
And, holding it unwholesome to be
fasters
Long after sunrise, lo! The Earl and
train
Dismount, to rest their nags and
eat their breakfast.
The morning rose, the small birds
caroll'd sweetly—
The corks were drawn, the pasty
brooks incision—
His lordship jests, his train are
choked with laughter,
When,—wondrous change of cheer,
and most unlook'd for,
Strange epilogue to bottle and to
baked meat!—
Flash'd from the greenwood half a
score of carabines,
And the good Earl of Cassilis, in
his breakfast,
Had nooning, dinner, supper, all at
once,
Even in the morning that he closed
his journey;
And the grim sexton, for his cham-
berlain,
Made him the bed which rests the
head for ever.
Gif. Told with much spirit, cousin
—some there are
Would add, and in a tone resembling
triumph.
And would that with these long
establish'd facts
My tale began and ended! I must
tell you,
That evil-deeming censures of the
events,
Both at the time and now, throw
blame on thee—
Time, place, and circumstance, they
say, proclaim thee,
Alike, the author of that morning's
ambush.
Auch. Ay, 'tis an old belief in
Carrick here,
Where natives do not always die in
bed,
That if a Kennedy shall not attain
Methuselah's last span, a Mure has
slain him.
Such is the general creed of all their
clan.
Thank Heaven, that they're bound
to prove the charge
They are so prompt in making.
They have clamour'd
Enough of this before, to show their
malice.
But what said these coward pick-
thanks when I came
Before the King, before the Jus-
ticers,
Rebutting all their calumnies, and
daring them

To show that I knew aught of Cassilis' journey—
Which way he meant to travel—where to halt—
Without which knowledge I possess'd no means
To dress an ambush for him? Did I not
Defy the assembled clan of Kennedys
To show, by proof direct or inferential,
Wherefore they slander'd me with this foul charge?
My gauntlet rung before them in the court,
And I did dare the best of them to lift it,
And prove such charge a true one —Did I not?

Gif. I saw your gauntlet lie before the Kennedys,
Who look'd on it as men do on an adder,
Longing to crush, and yet afraid to grasp it.
Not an eye sparkled—not a foot advanced—
No arm was stretch'd to lift the fatal symbol.

Auch. Then, wherefore do the hildings murmur now?
Wish they to see again, how one bold Mure
Can baffle and defy their assembled valour?

Gif. No; but they speak of evidence suppress'd.

Auch. Suppress'd — what evidence?—by whom suppress'd?
What Will-o'-Wisp—what idiot of a witness,
Is he to whom they trace an empty voice,
But cannot show his person?

Gif. They pretend,
With the King's leave, to bring it to a trial;
Averring that a lad, named Quentin Blane,
Brought thee a letter from the murder'd Earl,
With friendly greetings, telling of his journey,
The hour which he set forth, the place he halted at,
Affording thee the means to form the ambush,
Of which your hatred made the application.

Auch. A prudent Earl, indeed, if such his practice,
When dealing with a recent enemy!
And what should he propose by such strange confidence
In one who sought it not?

Gif. His purposes were kindly, say the Kennedys—
Desiring you would meet him where he halted,
Offering to undertake whate'er commissions
You listed trust him with, for court or city:
And, thus apprised of Cassilis' purposed journey,
And of his halting place, you placed the ambush,
Prepared the homicides——

Auch. They're free to say their pleasure. They are men
Of the new court—and I am but a fragment
Of stout old Morton's faction. It is reason
That such as I be rooted from the earth
That they may have full room to spread their branches.
No doubt, 'tis easy to find strolling vagrants
To prove whate'er they prompt. This Quentin Blane—
Did you not call him so?—why comes he now?
And wherefore not before? This must be answer'd —[*abruptly*]—
Where is he now?

Gif. Abroad — they say — kidnapp'd,
By you kidnapp'd, that he might die in Flanders.
But orders have been sent for his discharge,
And his transmission hither.

Auch. [*assuming an air of composure.*] When they produce such witness, cousin Gifford,
We'll be prepared to meet it. In the meanwhile,
The King doth ill to throw his royal sceptre
In the accuser's scale, ere he can know
How justice shall incline it.

Gif. Our sage prince
Resents, it may be, less the death of Cassilis,

Than he is angry that the feud should burn,
After his royal voice had said, " Be quench'd: "
Thus urging prosecution less for slaughter,
Than that, being done against the King's command,
Treason is mix'd with homicide.
Auch. Ha! ha! most true, my cousin.
Why, well consider'd, 'tis a crime so great
To slay one's enemy, the King forbidding it,
Like parricide, it should be held impossible.
'Tis just as if a wretch retain'd the evil,
When the King's touch had bid the sores be heal'd;
And such a crime merits the stake at least.
What! can there be within a Scottish bosom
A feud so deadly, that it kept its ground
When the King said, Be friends! It is not credible.
Were I King James, I never would believe it:
I'd rather think the story all a dream,
And that there was no friendship, feud, nor journey,
No halt, no ambush, and no Earl of Cassilis,
Than dream anointed Majesty has wrong!—
Gif. Speak within door, coz.
Auch. O, true—[*aside*]—I shall betray myself
Even to this half-bred fool.—I must have room,
Room for an instant, or I suffocate—
Cousin, I prithee call our Philip hither—
Forgive me; 'twere more meet I summon'd him
Myself; but then the sight of yonder revel
Would chafe my blood, and I have need of coolness.
Gif. I understand thee—I will bring him straight. [*Exit.*
Auch. And if thou dost, he's lost his ancient trick
To fathom, as he wont, his five-pint flagons.—
This space is mine—O for the power to fill it,
Instead of senseless rage and empty curses,
With the dark spell which witches learn from fiends,
That smites the object of their hate afar,
Nor leaves a token of its mystic action,
Stealing the soul from out the unscathed body,
As lightning melts the blade, nor harms the scabbard!
—'Tis vain to wish for it—Each curse of mine
Falls to the ground as harmless as the arrows
Which children shoot at stars! The time for thought,
If thought could aught avail me, melts away,
Like to a snowball in a schoolboy's hand,
That melts the faster the more close he grasps it!—
If I had time, this Scottish Solomon,
Whom some call son of David the Musician,
Might find it perilous work to march to Carrick.
There's many a feud still slumbering in its ashes,
Whose embers are yet red. Nobles we have,
Stout as old Graysteel, and as hot as Bothwell;
Here too are castles look from crags as high
On seas as wide as Logan's. So the King—
Pshaw! He is here again—

Enter GIFFORD.

Gif. I heard you name
The King, my kinsman; know, he comes not hither.
Auch. [*affecting indifference.*] Nay, then we need not broach our barrels, cousin,
Nor purchase us new jerkins.—Comes not Philip?
Gif. Yes, sir. He tarries but to drink a service
To his good friends at parting.
Auch. Friends for the beadle or the sheriff-officer.
Well, let it pass. Who comes, and how attended,

Since James designs not westward?
Gif. O you shall have, instead, his fiery functionary,
George Home that was, but now Dunbar's great Earl;
He leads a royal host, and comes to show you
How he distributes justice on the Border,
Where judge and hangman oft reverse their office,
And the noose does its work before the sentence.
But I have said my tidings best and worst.
None but yourself can know what course the time
And peril may demand. To lift your banner,
If I might be a judge, were desperate game:
Ireland and Galloway offer you convenience
For flight, if flight be thought the better remedy;
To face the court requires the consciousness
And confidence of innocence. You alone
Can judge if you possess these attributes.
[*A noise behind the scenes.*
Auch. Philip, I think, has broken up his revels;
His ragged regiment are dispersing them,
Well liquor'd, doubtless. They're disbanded soldiers,
Or some such vagabonds.—Here comes the gallant.

Enter PHILIP. *He has a buff-coat and headpiece, wears a sword and dagger, with pistols at his girdle. He appears to be affected by liquor, but to be by no means intoxicated.*

Auch. You scare have been made known to one another
Although you sate together at the board.—
Son Philip, know and prize our cousin Gifford.
Phi. [*tastes the wine on the table.*] If you had prized him, sir, you had been loth
To have welcomed him in bastard Alicant:
I'll make amends, by pledging his good journey
In glorious Burgundy.—The stirrup-cup, ho!
And bring my cousin's horses to the court.
Auch. [*draws him aside.*] The stirrup-cup! He doth not ride to-night—
Shame on such churlish conduct to a kinsman!
Phi. [*aside to his father.*] I've news of pressing import.
Send the fool off.—Stay, I will start him for you.
[*To Gif.*] Yes, my kind cousin, Burgundy is better,
On a night-ride, to those who thread our moors,
And we may deal it freely to our friends,
For we came freely by it. Yonder ocean
Rolls many a purple cask upon our shore,
Rough with embossed shells and shagged sea-weed,
When the good skipper and his careful crew
Have had their latest earthly draught of brine,
And gone to quench, or to endure their thirst,
Where nectar's plenty, or even water's scarce,
And filter'd to the parched crew by dropsfull.
Auch. Thou'rt mad, son Philip! —Gifford's no intruder,
That we should rid him hence by such wild rants:
My kinsman hither rode at his own danger,
To tell us that Dunbar is hasting to us,
With a strong force, and with the King's commission,
To enforce against our house a hateful charge,
With every measure of extremity.
Phi. And is this all that our good cousin tells us?
I can say more, thanks to the ragged regiment,
With whose good company you have upbraided me,
On whose authority, I tell thee, cousin,
Dunbar is here already.

Gif. Already?
Phi. Yes, gentle coz. And you, my sire, be hasty
In what you think to do.
Auch. I think thou darest not jest on such a subject.
Where hadst thou these fell tidings?
Phi. Where you, too, might have heard them, noble father,
Save that your ears, nail'd to our kinsman's lips,
Would list no coarser accents. O, my soldiers,
My merry crew of vagabonds, for ever!
Scum of the Netherlands, and wash'd ashore
Upon this coast like unregarded sea-weed,
They had not been two hours on Scottish land,
When, lo! they met a military friend,
An ancient fourier, known to them of old,
Who, warm'd by certain stoups of searching wine,
Inform'd his old companions that Dunbar
Left Glasgow yesterday, comes here to-morrow;
Himself, he said, was sent a spy before,
To view what preparations we were making.
Auch. [*to Gif.*] If this be sooth, good kinsman, thou must claim
To take a part with us for life and death,
Or speed from hence, and leave us to our fortune.
Gif. In such dilemma,
Believe me, friend, I'd choose upon the instant—
But I lack harness, and a steed to charge on,
For mine is overtired, and, save my page,
There's not a man to back me. But I'll hie
To Kyle, and raise my vassals to your aid.
Phi. 'Twill be when the rats,
That on these tidings fly this house of ours,
Come back to pay their rents.—[*Aparl.*]
Auch. Courage, cousin—
Thou goest not hence ill mounted for thy need:
Full forty coursers feed in my wide stalls,
The best of them is yours to speed your journey.
Phi. Stand not on ceremony, good our cousin,
When safety signs, to shorten courtesy.
Gif. [*to Auch.*] Farewell then, cousin, for my tarrying here
Were ruin to myself, small aid to you;
Yet loving well your name and family,
I'd fain——
Phi. Be gone?—that is our object, too—
Kinsman, adieu.
[*Exit Gifford. Philip calls after him.*
You yeoman of the stable,
Give Master Gifford there my fleetest steed,
Yon cut-tail'd roan that trembles at a spear.—
[*Trampling of the horse heard going off.*
Hark! he departs. How swift the dastard rides,
To shun the neighbourhood of jeopardy!
[*He lays aside the appearance of levity which he has hitherto worn, and says very seriously,*
And now, my father—
Auch. And now, my son—thou'st ta'en a perilous game
Into thine hands, rejecting elder counsel,—
How dost thou mean to play it?
Phi. Sir, good gamesters play not
Till they review the cards which fate has dealt them,
Computing thus the chances of the game;
And wofully they seem to weigh against us.
Auch. Exile's a passing ill, and may be borne;
And when Dunbar and all his myrmidons
Are eastward turn'd, we'll seize our own again.
Phi. Would that were all the risk we had to stand to!
But more and worse,—a doom of treason, forfeiture,

Death to ourselves, dishonour to our house,
Is what the stern Justiciary menaces;
And, fatally for us, he hath the means
To make his threatenings good.
Auch. It cannot be. I tell thee, there's no force
In Scottish law to raze a house like mine,
Coeval with the time the Lords of Galloway
Submitted them unto the Scottish sceptre,
Renouncing rights of Tanistry and Brehon.
Some dreams they have of evidence; some suspicion.
But old Montgomery knows my purpose well,
And long before their mandate reach the camp
To crave the presence of this mighty witness,
He will be fitted with an answer to it.
Phi. Father, what we call great, is often ruin'd
By means so ludicrously disproportion'd,
They make me think upon the gunner's linstock,
Which, yielding forth a light about the size
And semblance of the glowworm, yet applied
To powder, blew a palace into atoms,
Sent a young King—a young Queen's mate at least—
Into the air, as high as e'er flew night-hawk,
And made such wild work in the realm of Scotland,
As they can tell who heard,—and you were one
Who saw, perhaps, the night-flight which began it.
Auch. If thou hast nought to speak but drunken folly,
I cannot listen longer.
Phi. I will speak brief and sudden. —There is one
Whose tongue to us has the same perilous force
Which Bothwell's powder had to Kirk of Field;
One whose least tones, and those but peasant accents,
Could rend the roof from off our father's castle,
Level its tallest turret with its base;
And he that doth possess this wondrous power
Sleeps this same night not five miles distant from us.
Auch. [*who had looked on Philip with much appearance of astonishment and doubt, exclaims,*] Then thou art mad indeed!—Ha! ha! I'm glad on't.
I'd purchase an escape from what I dread,
Even by the frenzy of my only son!
Phi. I thank you, but agree not to the bargain.
You rest on what yon civet cat has said:
Yon silken doublet, stuff'd with rotten straw,
Told you but half the truth, and knew no more.
But my good vagrants had a perfect tale:
They told me, little judging the importance,
That Quentin Blane has been discharged with them;
They told me, that a quarrel happ'd at landing,
And that the youngster and an ancient sergeant
Had left their company, and taken refuge
In Chapeldonan, where our ranger dwells;
They saw him scale the cliff on which it stands,
Ere they were out of sight; the old man with him.
And therefore laugh no more at me as mad;
But laugh, if thou hast list for merriment,
To think he stands on the same land with us,
Whose absence thou wouldst deem were cheaply purchased
With thy soul's ransom and thy body's danger.
Auch. 'Tis then a fatal truth! Thou art no yelper
To open rashly on so wild a scent;
Thou'rt the young bloodhound, which careers and springs,
Frolics and fawns, as if the friend of man,
But seizes on his victim like a tiger.
Phi. No matter what I am—I'm as you bred me;

So let that pass till there be time to mend me,
And let us speak like men, and to the purpose.
This object of our fear and of our dread,
Since such our pride must own him, sleeps to-night
Within our power:—to-morrow in Dunbar's,
And we are then his victims.
Auch. He is in *ours* to-night.
Phi. He is. I'll answer that MacLellan's trusty.
Auch. Yet he replied to you to-day full rudely.
Phi. Yes! The poor knave has got a handsome wife,
And is gone mad with jealousy.
Auch. Fool!—When we need the utmost faith, allegiance,
Obedience, and attachment in our vassals,
Thy wild intrigues pour gall into their hearts,
And turn their love to hatred!
Phi. Most reverend sire, you talk of ancient morals,
Preach'd on by Knox, and practised by Glencairn;
Respectable, indeed, but somewhat musty
In these our modern nostrils. In our days,
If a young baron chance to leave his vassal
The sole possessor of a handsome wife,
'Tis sign he loves his follower; and, if not,
He loves his follower's wife, which often proves
The surer bond of patronage. Take either case:
Favour flows in of course, and vassals rise.
Auch. Philip, this is infamous,
And, what is worse, impolitic. Take example:
Break not God's laws or man's for each temptation
That youth and blood suggest. I am a man—
A weak and erring man;—full well thou know'st
That I may hardly term myself a pattern
Even to my son;—yet thus far will I say,
I never swerved from my integrity,
Save at the voice of strong necessity,
Or such o'erpowering view of high advantage
As wise men liken to necessity,
In strength and force compulsive. No one saw me
Exchange my reputation for my pleasure,
Or do the Devil's work without his wages.
I practised prudence, and paid tax to virtue,
By following her behests, save where strong reason
Compell'd a deviation. Then, if preachers
At times look'd sour, or elders shook their heads,
They could not term my walk irregular;
For I stood up still for the worthy cause,
A pillar, though a flaw'd one, of the altar,
Kept a strict walk, and led three hundred horse.
Phi. Ah, these three hundred horse in such rough times
Were better commendation to a party
Than all your efforts at hypocrisy,
Betray'd so oft by avarice and ambition,
And dragg'd to open shame. But, righteous father,
When sire and son unite in mutual crime,
And join their efforts to the same enormity,
It is no time to measure other's faults,
Or fix the amount of each. Most moral father,
Think if it be a moment now to weigh
The vices of the Heir of Auchindrane,
Or take precaution that the ancient house
Shall have another heir than the sly courtier
That's gaping for the forfeiture.
Auch. We'll disappoint him, Philip,—
We'll disappoint him yet. It is a folly,
A wilful cheat, to cast our eyes behind,

When time, and the fast flitting opportunity,
Call loudly, nay, compel us to look forward:
Why are we not already at MacLellan's,
Since there the victim sleeps?
Phi. Nay, soft, I pray thee,
I had not made your piety my confessor,
Nor enter'd in debate on these sage councils,
Which you're more like to give than I to profit by,
Could I have used the time more usefully;
But first an interval must pass between
The fate of Quentin and the little artifice
That shall detach him from his comrade,
The stout old soldier that I told you of.
Auch. How work a point so difficult—so dangerous!
Phi. 'Tis cared for. Mark, my father, the convenience
Arising from mean company. My agents
Are at my hand, like a good workman's tools,
And if I mean a mischief, ten to one
That they anticipate the deed and guilt.
Well knowing this, when first the vagrant's tattle
Gave me the hint that Quentin was so near us,
Instant I sent MacLellan, with strong charges
To stop him for the night, and bring me word,
Like an accomplish'd spy, how all things stood,
Lulling the enemy into security.
Auch. There was a prudent general!
Phi. MacLellan went and came within the hour.
The jealous bee, which buzzes in his nightcap,
Had humm'd to him, this fellow, Quentin Blane,
Had been in schoolboy days an humble lover
Of his own pretty wife—
Auch. Most fortunate!
The knave will be more prompt to serve our purpose.
Phi. No doubt on't. 'Mid the tidings he brought back
Was one of some importance. The old man
Is flush of dollars; this I caused him tell
Among his comrades, who became as eager
To have him in their company, as e'er
They had been wild to part with him. And in brief space,
A letter's framed by an old hand amongst them,
Familiar with such feats. It bore the name
And character of old Montgomery,
Whom he might well suppose at no great distance,
Commanding his old Sergeant Hildebrand,
By all the ties of late authority,
Conjuring him by ancient soldiership,
To hasten to his mansion instantly,
On business of high import, with a charge
To come alone——
Auch. Well, he sets out, I doubt it not,—what follows?
Phi. I am not curious into others' practices,—
So far I'm an economist in guilt,
As you my sire advise. But on the road
To old Montgomery's he meets his comrades,
They nourish grudge against him and his dollars,
And things may hap, which counsel, learn'd in law,
Call Robbery and Murder. Should he live,
He has seen naught that we would hide from him.
Auch. Who carries the forged letter to the veteran?
Phi. Why, Niel MacLellan, who, return'd again
To his own tower, as if to pass the night there.
They pass'd on him, or tried to pass, a story,
As if they wish'd the sergeant's company,
Without the young comptroller's—that is Quentin's,

And he became an agent of their plot,
That he might better carry on our own.
Auch. There's life in it—yes, there is life in 't;
And we will have a mounted party ready
To scour the moors in quest of the banditti
That kill'd the poor old man—they shall die instantly.
Dunbar shall see us use sharp justice here,
As well as he in Teviotdale. You are sure
You gave no hint nor impulse to their purpose?
Phi. It needed not. The whole pack oped at once
Upon the scent of dollars.—But time comes
When I must seek the tower, and act with Niel
What farther's to be done.
Auch. Alone with him thou goest not. He bears grudge—
Thou art my only son, and on a night
When such wild passions are so free abroad,
When such wild deeds are doing, 'tis but natural
I guarantee thy safety.—I'll ride with thee.
Phi. E'en as you will, my lord. But, pardon me,—
If you will come, let us not have a word
Of conscience, and of pity, and forgiveness;
Fine words to-morrow, out of place to-night.
Take counsel then, leave all this work to me;
Call up your household, make fit preparation,
In love and peace, to welcome this Earl Justiciar,
As one that's free of guilt. Go, deck the castle
As for an honour'd guest. Hallow the chapel
(If they have power to hallow it) with thy prayers.
Let me ride forth alone, and ere the sun
Comes o'er the eastern hill, thou shalt accost him:
"Now do thy worst, thou oft-returning spy,
Here 's nought thou canst discover."
Auch. Yet goest thou not alone with that MacLellan!
He deems thou bearest will to injure him,
And seek'st occasion suiting to such will.
Philip, thou art irreverent, fierce, ill-nurtured,
Stain'd with low vices, which disgust a father;
Yet ridest thou not alone with yonder man,—
Come weal come woe, myself will go with thee.
[*Exit, and calls to horse behind the scene.*
Phi. [*alone.*] Now would I give my fleetest horse to know
What sudden thought roused this paternal care,
And if 'tis on his own account or mine:
'Tis true, he hath the deepest share in all
That's likely now to hap, or which has happen'd.
Yet strong through Nature's universal reign,
The link which binds the parent to the offspring·
The she-wolf knows it, and the tigress owns it.
So that dark man, who, shunning what is vicious,
Ne'er turn'd aside from an atrocity,
Hath still some care left for his hapless offspring.
Therefore 'tis meet, though wayward, light, and stubborn,
That I should do for him all that a son
Can do for sire—and his dark wisdom join'd
To influence my bold courses, 'twill be hard
To break our mutual purpose.—Horses there! [*Exit.*

ACT III.—Scene I.

It is moonlight. The scene is the Beach beneath the Tower which was exhibited in the first scene,—the Vessel is gone from her anchorage. Auchindrane and

PHILIP, as if dismounted from their horses, come forward cautiously.

Phi. The nags are safely stow'd. Their noise might scare him;
Let them be safe, and ready when we need them,
The business is but short. We'll call MacLellan,
To wake him, and in quiet bring him forth,
If he be so disposed, for here are waters
Enough to drown, and sand enough to cover him.
But if he hesitate, or fear to meet us,
By heaven I'll deal on him in Chapeldonan
With my own hand!—
Auch. Too furious boy!—alarm or noise undoes us,
Our practice must be silent as 'tis sudden.
Bethink thee that conviction of this slaughter
Confirms the very worst of accusations
Our foes can bring against us. Wherefore should we,
Who by our birth and fortune mate with nobles,
And are allied with them, take this lad's life,—
His peasant life,—unless to quash his evidence,
Taking such pains to rid him from the world,
Who would, if spared, have fix'd a crime upon us?
Phi. Well, I do own me one of those wise folks,
Who think that when a deed of fate is plann'd,
The execution cannot be too rapid.
But do we still keep purpose? Is't determined
He sails for Ireland—and without a wherry?
Salt water is his passport—is it not so?
Auch. I would it could be otherwise.
Might he not go there while in life and limb,
And breathe his span out in another air?
Many seek Ulster never to return—
Why might this wretched youth not harbour there?
Phi. With all my heart. It is small honour to me
To be the agent in a work like this.—
Yet this poor caitiff, having thrust himself
Into the secrets of a noble house,
And twined himself so closely with our safety,
That we must perish, or that he must die,
I'll hesitate as little on the action,
As I would do to slay the animal
Whose flesh supplies my dinner. 'Tis as harmless,
That deer or steer, as is this Quentin Blane,
And not more necessary is its death
To our accommodation—so we slay it
Without a moment's pause or hesitation.
Auch. 'Tis not, my son, the feeling call'd remorse,
That now lies tugging at this heart of mine,
Engendering thoughts that stop the lifted hand.
Have I not heard John Knox pour forth his thunders
Against the oppressor and the man of blood,
In accents of a minister of vengeance?
Were not his fiery eyeballs turn'd on me,
As if he said expressly, "Thou'rt the man"?
Yet did my solid purpose, as I listen'd,
Remain unshaken as that massive rock.
Phi. Well, then, I'll understand 'tis not remorse,—
As 'tis a foible little known to thee,—
That interrupts thy purpose. What, then, is it?
Is't scorn, or is't compassion? One thing's certain,
Either the feeling must have free indulgence,
Or fully be subjected to your reason—
There is no room for these same treacherous courses,
Which men call moderate measures.
We must confide in Quentin, or must slay him.
Auch. In Ireland he might live afar from us.

Phi. Among Queen Mary's faithful partisans,
Your ancient enemies, the haughty Hamiltons,
The stern MacDonnells, the resentful Græmes—
With these around him, and with Cassilis' death
Exasperating them against you, think, my father,
What chance of Quentin's silence.
Auch. Too true—too true. He is a silly youth, too,
Who had not wit to shift for his own living—
A bashful lover, whom his rivals laugh'd at—
Of pliant temper, which companions play'd on—
A moonlight waker, and a noontide dreamer—
A torturer of phrases into sonnets,—
Whom all might lead that chose to praise his rhymes.
Phi. I marvel that your memory has room
To hold so much on such a worthless subject.
Auch. Base in himself, and yet so strangely link'd
With me and with my fortunes, that I've studied
To read him through and through, as I would read
Some paltry rhyme of vulgar prophecy,
Said to contain the fortunes of my house;
And, let me speak him truly—He is grateful,
Kind, tractable, obedient—a child
Might lead him by a thread—He shall not die!
Phi. Indeed!—then have we had our midnight ride
To wondrous little purpose.
Auch. By the blue heaven,
Thou shalt not murder him, cold selfish sensualist!
Yon pure vault speaks it—yonder summer moon,
With its ten million sparklers, cries, Forbear!
The deep earth sighs it forth—Thou shalt not murder!—
Thou shalt not mar the image of thy Maker!
Thou shalt not from thy brother take the life,
The precious gift which God alone can give!—
Phi. Here is a worthy guerdon now, for stuffing
His memory with old saws and holy sayings!
They come upon him in the very crisis,
And when his resolution should be firmest,
They shake it like a palsy—Let it be,
He'll end at last by yielding to temptation,
Consenting to the thing which must be done,
With more remorse the more he hesitates.—
[*To his Father, who has stood fixed after his last speech.*
Well, sir, 'tis fitting you resolve at last,
How the young clerk shall be disposed upon;
Unless you would ride home to Auchindrane,
And bid them rear the Maiden in the court-yard,
That when Dunbar comes, he have nought to do
But bid us kiss the cushion and the headsman.
Auch. It is too true—There is no safety for us,
Consistent with the unhappy wretch's life!
In Ireland he is sure to find my enemies.
Arran I've proved—the Netherlands I've tried,
But wilds and wars return him on my hands.
Phi. Yet fear not, father, we'll make surer work;
The land has caves, the sea has whirlpools,
Where that which they suck in returns no more.
Auch. I will know nought of it, hard-hearted boy!
Phi. Hard-hearted! Why—my heart is soft as yours;
But then they must not feel remorse at once,
We can't afford such wasteful tenderness:
I can mouth forth remorse as well as you.
Be executioner, and I'll be chaplain,

And say as mild and moving things as you can;
But one of us must keep his steely temper.
Auch. Do thou the deed—I cannot look on it.
Phi. So be it—walk with me—MacLellan brings him.
The boat lies moor'd within that reach of rock,
And 'twill require our greatest strength combined
To launch it from the beach. Meantime, MacLellan
Brings our man hither.—See the twinkling light
That glances in the tower.
Auch. Let us withdraw — for should he spy us suddenly,
He may suspect us, and alarm the family.
Phi. Fear not, MacLellan has his trust and confidence,
Bought with a few sweet words and welcomes home.
Auch. But think you that the Ranger may be trusted?
Phi. I'll answer for him.—Let's go float the shallop.

[*They go off, and as they leave the Stage, MacLellan is seen descending from the Tower with Quentin. The former bears a dark lantern. They come upon the stage.*

Mac. [*showing the light.*] So—bravely done—that's the last ledge of rocks,
And we are on the sands.—I have broke your slumbers
Somewhat untimely.
Que. Do not think so, friend.
These six years past I have been used to stir
When the réveille rung; and that, believe me,
Chooses the hours for rousing me at random,
And, having given its summons, yields no licence
To indulge a second slumber. Nay, more, I'll tell thee,
That, like a pleased child, I was e'en too happy
For sound repose.
Mac. The greater fool were you.
Men should enjoy the moments given to slumber;
For who can tell how soon may be the waking,
Or where we shall have leave to sleep again?
Que. The God of Slumber comes not at command.
Last night the blood danced merry through my veins:
Instead of finding this our land of Carrick
The dreary waste my fears had apprehended,
I saw thy wife, MacLellan, and thy daughter,
And had a brother's welcome;—saw thee, too,
Renew'd my early friendship with you both,
And felt once more that I had friends and country.
So keen the joy that tingled through my system,
Join'd with the searching powers of yonder wine,
That I am glad to leave my feverish lair,
Although my hostess smooth'd my couch herself,
To cool my brow upon this moonlight beach,
Gaze on the moonlight dancing on the waves.
Such scenes are wont to soothe me into melancholy;
But such the hurry of my spirits now,
That everything I look on makes me laugh.
Mac. I've seen but few so gamesome, Master Quentin,
Being roused from sleep so suddenly as you were.
Que. Why, there's the jest on't. Your old castle's haunted.
In vain the host—in vain the lovely hostess,
In kind addition to all means of rest,
Add their best wishes for our sound repose,
When some hobgoblin brings a pressing message:
Montgomery presently must see his sergeant,
And up gets Hildebrand, and off he trudges.
I can't but laugh to think upon the grin
With which he doff'd the kerchief he had twisted

Around his brows, and put his morion on—
Ha! ha! ha! ha!
Mac. I'm glad to see you merry, Quentin.
Que. Why faith, my spirits are but transitory,
And you may live with me a month or more,
And never see me smile. Then some such trifle
As yonder little maid of yours would laugh at,
Will serve me for a theme of merriment—
Even now, I scarce can keep my gravity;
We were so snugly settled in our quarters,
With full intent to let the sun be high
Ere we should leave our beds—and first the one
And then the other's summon'd briefly forth,
To the old tune, "Black Bandsmen, up and march"
Mac. Well! you shall sleep anon —rely upon it—
And make up time misspent. Meantime, methinks,
You are so merry on your broken slumbers,
You ask'd not why I call'd you.
Que. I can guess,
You lack my aid to search the weir for seals,
You lack my company to stalk a deer.
Think you I have forgot your silvan tasks,
Which oft you have permitted me to share,
Till days that we were rivals?
Mac. You have memory
Of that too?—
Que. Like the memory of a dream,
Delusion far too exquisite to last.
Mac. You guess not then for what I call you forth,
It was to meet a friend—
Que. What friend? Thyself excepted,
The good old man who's gone to see Montgomery,
And one to whom I once gave dearer title,
I know not in wide Scotland man or woman
Whom I could name a friend.
Mac. Thou art mistaken.
There is a Baron, and a powerful one——
Que. There flies my fit of mirth. You have a grave
And alter'd man before you.
Mac. Compose yourself, there is no cause for fear,—
He will and must speak with you.
Que. Spare me the meeting, Niel, I cannot see him.
Say, I'm just landed on my native earth;
Say, that I will not cumber it a day;
Say, that my wretched thread of poor existence
Shall be drawn out in solitude and exile,
Where never memory of so mean a thing
Again shall cross his path—but do not ask me
To see or speak again with that dark man!
Mac. Your fears are now as foolish as your mirth—
What should the powerful Knight of Auchindrane
In common have with such a man as thou?
Que. No matter what—Enough, I will not see him.
Mac. He is thy master, and he claims obedience.
Que. My master? Ay, my task-master—Ever since
I could write man, his hand hath been upon me;
No step I've made but cumber'd with his chain,
And I am weary on't—I will not see him.
Mac. You must and shall—there is no remedy.
Que. Take heed that you compel me not to find one.
I've seen the wars since we had strife together;
To put my late experience to the test
Were something dangerous—Ha, I am betray'd!
[*While the latter part of this dialogue is passing, Auchindrane and Philip enter on the Stage from behind, and suddenly present themselves.*
Auch. What says the runagate?

Que. [*laying aside all appearance of resistance.*] Nothing, you are my fate;
And in a shape more fearfully resistless,
My evil angel could not stand before me.
Auch. And so you scruple, slave, at my command,
To meet me when I deign to ask thy presence?
Que. No, sir; I had forgot—I am your bond-slave;
But sure a passing thought of independence,
For which I've seen whole nations doing battle,
Was not, in one who has so long enjoy'd it,
A crime beyond forgiveness.
Auch. We shall see:
Thou wert my vassal, born upon my land,
Bred by my bounty—It concern'd me highly,
Thou know'st it did—and yet against my charge
Again I find thy worthlessness in Scotland.
Que. Alas! the wealthy and the powerful know not
How very dear to those who have least share in 't,
Is that sweet word of country! The poor exile
Feels, in each action of the varied day,
His doom of banishment. The very air
Cools not his brow as in his native land;
The scene is strange, the food is loathly to him;
The language, nay, the music jars his ear.
Why should I, guiltless of the slightest crime,
Suffer a punishment which, sparing life,
Deprives that life of all which men hold dear?
Auch. Hear ye the serf I bred, begin to reckon
Upon his rights and pleasure! Who am I—
Thou abject, who am I, whose will thou thwartest?
Phi. Well spoke, my pious sire. There goes remorse!
Let once thy precious pride take fire, and then,
MacLellan, you and I may have small trouble.
Que. Your words are deadly, and your power resistless;
I'm in your hands—but, surely, less than life
May give you the security you seek,
Without commission of a mortal crime.
Auch. Who is 't would deign to think upon thy life?
I but require of thee to speed to Ireland,
Where thou mayst sojourn for some little space,
Having due means of living dealt to thee,
And, when it suits the changes of the times,
Permission to return.
Que. Noble my lord,
I am too weak to combat with your pleasure;
Yet, O, for mercy's sake, and for the sake
Of that dear land which is our common mother,
Let me not part in darkness from my country!
Pass but an hour or two, and every cape,
Headland, and bay, shall gleam with new-born light,
And I'll take boat as gaily as the bird
That soars to meet the morning.
Grant me but this—to show no darker thoughts
Are on your heart than those your speech expresses!
Phi. A modest favour, friend, is this you ask!
Are we to pace the beach like watermen,
Waiting your worship's pleasure to take boat?
No, by my faith! you go upon the instant.
The boat lies ready, and the ship receives you
Near to the point of Turnberry.—Come, we wait you;
Bestir you!
Que. I obey.—Then farewell, Scotland,
And Heaven forgive my sins, and grant that mercy,

Which mortal man deserves not!
Auch. [*speaks aside to his Son.*] What signal
Shall let me know 'tis done?
Phi. When the light is quench'd,
Your fears for Quentin Blane are at an end.—
[*To Que.*] Come, comrade, come, we must begin our voyage.
Que. But when, O when to end it!
[*He goes off reluctantly with Philip and MacLellan. Auchindrane stands looking after them. The Moon becomes overclouded, and the Stage dark. Auchindrane, who has gazed fixedly and eagerly after those who have left the Stage, becomes animated, and speaks.*
Auch. It is no fallacy!—The night is dark,
The moon has sunk before the deepening clouds;
I cannot on the murky beach distinguish
The shallop from the rocks which lie beside it;
I cannot see tall Philip's floating plume,
Nor trace the sullen brow of Niel MacLellan;
Yet still that caitiff's visage is before me,
With chattering teeth, mazed look, and bristling hair,
As he stood here this moment!—Have I changed
My human eyes for those of some night prowler,
The wolf's, the tiger-cat's, or the hoarse bird's
That spies its prey at midnight? I can see him—
Yes, I can see him, seeing no one else,—
And well it is I do. In his absence,
Strange thoughts of pity mingled with my purpose,
And moved remorse within me—But they vanish'd
Whene'er he stood a living man before me;
Then my antipathy awaked within me,
Seeing its object close within my reach,
Till I could scarce forbear him.—How they linger!
The boat's not yet to sea!—I ask myself,
What has the poor wretch done to wake my hatred—
Docile, obedient, and in sufferance patient?—
As well demand what evil has the hare
Done to the hound that courses her in sport.
Instinct infallible supplies the reason—
And that must plead my cause.—The vision's gone!
Their boat now walks the waves; a single gleam,
Now seen, now lost, is all that marks her course;
That soon shall vanish too—then all is over!—
Would it were o'er, for in this moment lies
The agony of ages!—Now, 'tis gone—
And all is acted!—no—she breasts again
The opposing wave, and bears the tiny sparkle
Upon her crest—[*A faint cry heard as from seaward.*]
Ah! there was fatal evidence,
All's over now, indeed!—The light is quench'd—
And Quentin, source of all my fear, exists not.—
The morning tide shall sweep his corpse to sea,
And hide all memory of this stern night's work.
[*He walks in a slow and deeply meditative manner towards the side of the Stage, and suddenly meets Marion, the wife of MacLellan, who has descended from the Castle.*
Now, how to meet Dunbar—Heaven guard my senses!
Stand! who goes there?—Do spirits walk the earth
Ere yet they've left the body!
Mar. Is it you,
My lord, on this wild beach at such an hour!
Auch. It is MacLellan's wife, in search of him,
Or of her lover—of the murderer,
Or of the murder'd man.—Go to, Dame Marion,
Men have their hunting-gear to give an eye to,

Their snares and trackings for their game. But women
Should shun the night air. A young wife also,
Still more a handsome one, should keep her pillow
Till the sun gives example for her wakening.
Come, dame, go back—back to your bed again.
Mar. Hear me, my lord! there have been sights and sounds
That terrified my child and me—Groans, screams,
As if of dying seamen, came from ocean—
A corpse-light danced upon the crested waves
For several minutes' space, then sunk at once.
When we retired to rest we had two guests,
Besides my husband Niel—I'll tell your lordship
Who the men were——
Auch. Pshaw, woman, can you think
That I have any interest in your gossips?
Please your own husband, and that you may please him,
Get thee to bed, and shut up doors, good dame.
Were I MacLellan, I should scarce be satisfied
To find thee wandering here in mist and moonlight,
When silence should be in thy habitation,
And sleep upon thy pillow.
Mar. Good my lord,
This is a holyday.—By an ancient custom
Our children seek the shore at break of day,
And gather shells, and dance, and play, and sport them
In honour of the Ocean. Old men say
The custom is derived from heathen times. Our Isabel
Is mistress of the feast, and you may think
She is awake already, and impatient
To be the first shall stand upon the beach,
And bid the sun good-morrow.
Auch. Ay, indeed?
Linger such dregs of heathendom among you?
And hath Knox preach'd, and Wishart died, in vain!
Take notice, I forbid these sinful practices,
And will not have my followers mingle in them.
Mar. If such your honour's pleasure, I must go
And lock the door on Isabel; she is wilful,
And voice of mine will have small force to keep her
From the amusement she so long has dream'd of.
But I must tell your honour, the old people,
That were survivors of the former race,
Prophesied evil if this day should pass
Without due homage to the mighty Ocean.
Auch. Folly and Papistry—Perhaps the ocean
Hath had his morning sacrifice already;
Or can you think the dreadful element,
Whose frown is death, whose roar the dirge of navies,
Will miss the idle pageant you prepare for?
I've business for you, too—the dawn advances—
I'd have thee lock thy little child in safety,
And get to Auchindrane before the sun rise;
Tell them to get a royal banquet ready,
As if a king were coming there to feast him.
Mar. I will obey your pleasure. But my husband——
Auch. I wait him on the beach, and bring him in
To share the banquet.
Mar. But he has a friend,
Whom it would ill become him to intrude
Upon your hospitality.
Auch. Fear not; his friend shall be made welcome too,
Should he return with Niel.
Mar. He must—he will return—he has no option.

Auch. [*Apart.*] Thus rashly do we deem of others' destiny—
He has indeed no option—but he comes not.
Begone on thy commission—I go this way
To meet thy husband.

[*Marion goes to her Tower, and after entering it, is seen to come out, lock the door, and leave the Stage, as if to execute Auchindrane's commission. He, apparently going off in a different direction, has watched her from the side of the Stage, and on her departure speaks.*

Auch. Fare thee well, fond woman,
Most dangerous of spies—thou prying, prating,
Spying, and telling woman! I've cut short
Thy dangerous testimony—hated word!
What other evidence have we cut short,
And by what fated means, this dreary morning!—
Bright lances here and helmets?—I must shift
To join the others. [*Exit.*

Enter from the other side the SERGEANT, *accompanied with an Officer and two Pikemen.*

Ser. 'Twas in good time you came; a minute later
The knaves had ta'en my dollars and my life.
Off. You fought most stoutly. Two of them were down,
Ere we came to your aid.
Ser. Gramercy, halberd!
And well it happens, since your leader seeks
This Quentin Blane, that you have fall'n on me;
None else can surely tell you where he hides,
Being in some fear, and bent to quit this province.
Off. 'Twill do our Earl good service. He has sent
Despatches into Holland for this Quentin.
Ser. I left him two hours since in yonder tower,
Under the guard of one who smoothly spoke,
Although he look'd but roughly—I will chide him
For bidding me go forth with yonder traitor.
Off. Assure yourself 'twas a concerted stratagem.
Montgomery's been at Holyrood for months,
And can have sent no letter—'twas a plan
On you and on your dollars, and a base one,
To which this Ranger was most likely privy;
Such men as he hang on our fiercer barons,
The ready agents of their lawless will;
Boys of the belt, who aid their master's pleasures,
And in his moods ne'er scruple his injunctions.
But haste, for now we must unkennel Quentin;
I've strictest charge concerning him.
Ser. Go up, then, to the tower.
You've younger limbs than mine—there shall you find him
Lounging and snoring, like a lazy cur
Before a stable door; it is his practice.

[*The Officer goes up to the Tower, and after knocking without receiving an answer, turns the key which Marion had left in the lock, and enters; Isabel, dressed as if for her dance, runs out and descends to the Stage; the Officer follows.*

Off. There 's no one in the house, this little maid
Excepted——
Isa. And for me, I'm there no longer,
And will not be again for three hours good:
I'm gone to join my playmates on the sands.
Off. [*detaining her.*] You shall, when you have told to me distinctly
Where are the guests who slept up there last night.
Isa. Why, there is the old man, he stands beside you,
The merry old man, with the glistening hair;

He left the tower at midnight, for my father
Brought him a letter.
Ser. In ill hour I left you,
I wish to Heaven that I had stay'd with you;
There is a nameless horror that comes o'er me.—
Speak, pretty maiden, tell us what chanced next,
And thou shalt have thy freedom.
Isa. After you went last night, my father
Grew moody, and refused to doff his clothes,
Or go to bed, as sometimes he will do
When there is aught to chafe him. Until past midnight,
He wander'd to and fro, then call'd the stranger,
The gay young man, that sung such merry songs,
Yet ever look'd most sadly whilst he sung them,
And forth they went together.
Off. And you've seen
Or heard nought of them since?
Isa. Seen surely nothing, and I cannot think
That they have lot or share in what I heard.
I heard my mother praying, for the corpse-lights
Were dancing on the waves; and at one o'clock,
Just as the Abbey steeple toll'd the knell,
There was a heavy plunge upon the waters,
And some one cried aloud for mercy! —mercy!
It was the water-spirit, sure, which promised
Mercy to boat and fisherman, if we
Perform'd to-day's rites duly. Let me go—
I am to lead the ring.
Off. [*to Ser.*] Detain her not. She cannot tell us more;
To give her liberty is the sure way
To lure her parents homeward.— Strahan, take two men,
And should the father or the mother come,
Arrest them both, or either. Auchindrane
May come upon the beach; arrest him also,
But do not state a cause. I'll back again,
And take direction from my Lord Dunbar.
Keep you upon the beach, and have an eye
To all that passes there.
[*Exeunt separately.*

Scene II.

Scene changes to a remote and rocky part of the Seabeach.

Enter Auchindrane *meeting* Philip.

Auch. The devil's brought his legions to this beach,
That wont to be so lonely; morions, lances,
Show in the morning beam as thick as glowworms
At summer midnight.
Phi. I'm right glad to see them,
Be they whoe'er they may, so they are mortal;
For I've contended with a lifeless foe,
And I have lost the battle. I would give
A thousand crowns to hear a mortal steel
Ring on a mortal harness.
Auch. How now!—Art mad, or hast thou done the turn—
The turn we came for, and must live or die by?
Phi. 'Tis done, if man can do it; but I doubt
If this unhappy wretch have Heaven's permission
To die by mortal hands.
Auch. Where is he? — where's MacLellan?
Phi. In the deep—
Both in the deep, and what's immortal of them
Gone to the judgment-seat, where we must meet them.
Auch. MacLellan dead, and Quentin too?—So be it
To all that menace ill to Auchindrane,
Or have the power to injure him!— Thy words
Are full of comfort, but thine eye and look
Have in this pallid gloom a ghastliness,
Which contradicts the tidings of thy tongue.

Phi. Hear me, old man—There *is* a heaven above us,
As you have heard old Knox and Wishart preach,
Though little to your boot. The dreaded witness
Is slain, and silent. But his misused body
Comes right ashore, as if to cry for vengeance;
It rides the waters like a living thing,
Erect, as if he trode the waves which bear him.
Auch. Thou speakest frenzy, when sense is most required.
Phi. Hear me yet more!—I say I did the deed
With all the coolness of a practised hunter
When dealing with a stag. I struck him overboard,
And with MacLellan's aid I held his head
Under the waters, while the Ranger tied
The weights we had provided to his feet.
We cast him loose when life and body parted,
And bid him speed for Ireland. But even then,
As in defiance of the words we spoke,
The body rose upright behind our stern,
One half in ocean, and one half in air,
And tided after as in chase of us.
Auch. It was enchantment!—Did you strike at it?
Phi. Once and again. But blows avail'd no more
Than on a wreath of smoke, where they may break
The column for a moment, which unites
And is entire again. Thus the dead body
Sunk down before my oar, but rose unharm'd,
And dogg'd us closer still, as in defiance.
Auch. 'Twas Hell's own work!——
Phi. MacLellan then grew restive
And desperate in his fear, blasphemed aloud,
Cursing us both as authors of his ruin.
Myself was wellnigh frantic while pursued
By this dead shape, upon whose ghastly features
The changeful moonbeam spread a grisly light;
And, baited thus, I took the nearest way
To ensure his silence, and to quell his noise;
I used my dagger, and I flung him overboard,
And half expected his dead carcass also
Would join the chase—but he sunk down at once.
Auch. He had enough of mortal sin about him,
To sink an argosy.
Phi. But now resolve you what defence to make,
If Quentin's body shall be recognised;
For 'tis ashore already; and he bears
Marks of my handiwork; so does MacLellan.
Auch. The concourse thickens still —Away, away!
We must avoid the multitude.
[*They rush out.*

Scene III.

Scene changes to another part of the Beach. Children are seen dancing, and Villagers looking on. Isabel seems to take the management of the Dance.

Vil. Wom. How well she queens it, the brave little maiden!
Vil. Ay, they all queen it from their very cradle,
These willing slaves of haughty Auchindrane.
But now I hear the old man's reign is ended;—
'Tis well—he has been tyrant long enough.
Second Vil. Finlay, speak low, you interrupt the sports.
Third Vil. Look out to sea—There's something coming yonder,
Bound for the beach, will scare us from our mirth.
Fourth Vil. Pshaw, it is but a sea-gull on the wing,
Between the wave and sky.
Third Vil. Thou art a fool,
Standing on solid land—'tis a dead body.

Second Vil. And if it be, he bears him like a live one,
Not prone and weltering like a drowned corpse,
But bolt erect, as if he trode the waters,
And used them as his path.
Fourth Vil. It is a merman,
And nothing of this earth, alive or dead.
[*By degrees all the Dancers break off from their sport, and stand gazing to seaward, while an object, imperfectly seen, drifts towards the Beach, and at length arrives among the rocks which border the tide.*
Third Vil. Perhaps it is some wretch who needs assistance;
Jasper, make in and see.
Second Vil. Not I, my friend;
E'en take the risk yourself, you'd put on others.
[*Hildebrand has entered, and heard the two last words.*
Ser. What, are you men?
Fear ye to look on what you must be one day?
I, who have seen a thousand dead and dying
Within a flight-shot square, will teach you how in war
We look upon the corpse when life has left it.
[*He goes to the back scene, and seems attempting to turn the body, which has come ashore with its face downwards.*
Will none of you come aid to turn the body?
Isa. You're cowards all.—I'll help thee, good old man.
[*She goes to aid the Sergeant with the body, and presently gives a cry, and faints. Hildebrand comes forward. All crowd round him; he speaks with an expression of horror.*
Ser. 'Tis Quentin Blane! Poor youth, his gloomy bodings
Have been the prologue to an act of darkness;
His feet are manacled, his bosom stabb'd,
And he is foully murder'd. The proud Knight
And his dark Ranger must have done this deed,
For which no common ruffian could have motive.
A Pea. Caution were best, old man—Thou art a stranger,
The Knight is great and powerful.
Ser. Let it be so.
Call'd on by Heaven to stand forth an avenger,
I will not blench for fear of mortal man.
Have I not seen that when that innocent
Had placed her hands upon the murder'd body,
His gaping wounds, that erst were soak'd with brine,
Burst forth with blood as ruddy as the cloud
Which now the sun doth rise on?
Pea. What of that?
Ser. Nothing that can affect the innocent child,
But murder's guilt attaching to her father,
Since the blood musters in the victim's veins
At the approach of what holds lease from him
Of all that parents can transmit to children.
And here comes one to whom I'll vouch the circumstance.

The EARL OF DUNBAR *enters with Soldiers and others, having* AUCHINDRANE *and* PHILIP *prisoners.*

Dun. Fetter the young ruffian and his trait'rous father!
[*They are made secure.*
Auch. 'Twas a lord spoke it—I have known a knight,
Sir George of Home, who had not dared to say so.
Dun. 'Tis Heaven, not I, decides upon your guilt.
A harmless youth is traced within your power,
Sleeps in your Ranger's house—his friend at midnight
Is spirited away. Then lights are seen,
And groans are heard, and corpses come ashore
Mangled with daggers, while [*to Philip*] your dagger wears
The sanguine livery of recent slaughter:

Here, too, the body of a murder'd victim,
(Whom none but you had interest to remove,)
Bleeds on a child's approach, because the daughter
Of one the abettor of the wicked deed.
All this, and other proofs corroborative,
Call on us briefly to pronounce the doom
We have in charge to utter.
Auch. If my house perish, Heaven's will be done!
I wish not to survive it; but, O Philip,
Would one could pay the ransom for us both!
Phi. Father, 'tis fitter that we both should die,
Leaving no heir behind. — The piety
Of a bless'd saint, the morals of an anchorite,
Could not atone thy dark hypocrisy,
Or the wild profligacy I have practised.
Ruin'd our house, and shatter'd be our towers,
And with them end the curse our sins have merited!

THE HOUSE OF ASPEN

A TRAGEDY

ADVERTISEMENT

This attempt at dramatic composition was executed when the magnificent works of Goethe and Schiller were for the first time made known to the British public, and received with universal enthusiasm. What we admire we usually attempt to imitate; and the author, not trusting to his own efforts, borrowed the substance of the story and a part of the diction from a dramatic romance called *Der Heilige Vehmé* (the Secret Tribunal), which fills the sixth volume of the *Sagen der Vorzeit* (Tales of Antiquity), by Beit Weber. The drama must be termed rather a rifacimento of the original than a translation, since the whole is compressed, and the incidents and dialogue occasionally much varied. The imitator is ignorant of the real name of his ingenious contemporary, and has been informed that of Beit Weber is fictitious.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

Rudiger, *Baron of Aspen, an old German warrior.*

George of Aspen, } *sons to Rudi-*
Henry of Aspen, } *ger.*

Roderic, *Count of Maltingen, chief of a department of the Invisible Tribunal, and the hereditary enemy of the family of Aspen.*

William, *Baron of Wolfstein, ally of Count Roderic.*

Bertram of Ebersdorf, *brother to the former husband of the Baroness of Aspen, disguised as a minstrel.*

Duke of Bavaria.

Wickerd, } *followers of the House*
Reynold, } *of Aspen.*

Conrad, *Page of Honour to Henry of Aspen.*

Martin, *Squire to George of Aspen.*

Hugo, *Squire to Count Roderic.*

Peter, *an ancient domestic of Rudiger.*

Father Ludovic, *Chaplain to Rudiger.*

WOMEN

Isabella, *formerly married to Arnolf of Ebersdorf, now wife of Rudiger.*

Gertrude, *Isabella's niece, betrothed to Henry.*

Soldiers, Judges of the Invisible Tribunal, etc., etc.

Scene.—The Castle of Ebersdorf in Bavaria, the ruins of Griefenhaus, and the adjacent country.

ACT I.—Scene I.

An ancient Gothic chamber in the castle of Ebersdorf. Spears, crossbows, and arms, with the horns of buffaloes and of deer, are hung round the wall. An antique buffet with beakers and stone bottles.

Rudiger, *Baron of Aspen, and his lady,* Isabella, *are discovered sitting at a large oaken table.*

Rud. A plague upon that roan horse! Had he not stumbled with me at the ford after our last skirmish, I had been now with my sons. And yonder the boys are, hardly three miles off, battling with Count Roderic, and their father must lie here like a worm-eaten manuscript in a convent library! Out upon it! Out upon it! Is it not hard that a warrior, who has travelled so many leagues to display the cross on the walls of Zion, should be now unable to lift a spear before his own castle gate!

Isa. Dear husband, your anxiety retards your recovery.

Rud. May be so; but not less than your silence and melancholy! Here have I sate this month, and more, since that cursed fall! Neither hunting, nor feasting, nor lance-breaking for me! And my sons—George enters cold and reserved, as if he had the weight of the empire on his shoulders, utters by syllables a cold "How is it with you?" and shuts himself up for days in his solitary chamber — Henry, my cheerful Henry—

Isa. Surely, he at least—

Rud. Even he forsakes me, and skips up the tower staircase like lightning to join your fair ward, Gertrude, on the battlements. I cannot blame him; for, by my knightly faith, were I in his place, I think even these bruised bones would hardly keep me from her side. Still, however, here I must sit alone.

Isa. Not alone, dear husband. Heaven knows what I would do to soften your confinement.

Rud. Tell me not of that, lady. When I first knew thee, Isabella, the fair maid of Arnheim was the joy of her companions, and breathed life wherever she came. Thy father married thee to Arnolf of Ebersdorf —not much with thy will, 'tis true— [*she hides her face.*] Nay — forgive me, Isabella—but that is over—he died, and the ties between us, which thy marriage had broken, were renewed—but the sunshine of my Isabella's light heart returned no more.

Isa. [*weeping.*] Beloved Rudiger, you search my very soul! Why will you recall past times—days of spring that can never return? Do I not love thee more than ever wife loved husband?

Rud. [*stretches out his arms—she embraces him.*] And therefore art thou ever my beloved Isabella. But still, is it not true? Has not thy cheerfulness vanished since thou hast become Lady of Aspen? Dost thou repent of thy love to Rudiger?

Isa. Alas! no! never! never!

Rud. Then why dost thou herd with monks and priests, and leave thy old knight alone, when, for the first time in his stormy life, he has rested for weeks within the walls of his castle? Hast thou committed a crime from which Rudiger's love cannot absolve thee?

Isa. O many! many!

Rud. Then be this kiss thy penance. And tell me, Isabella, hast thou not founded a convent, and endowed it with the best of thy late husband's lands? Ay, and with a vineyard which I could have prized as well as the sleek monks. Dost thou not daily distribute alms to twenty pilgrims? Dost thou not cause ten masses to be sung each night for the repose of thy late husband's soul?

Isa. It will not know repose.

Rud. Well, well—God's peace be with Arnolf of Ebersdorf; the mention of him makes thee ever sad, though so many years have passed since his death.

Isa. But at present, dear husband, have I not the most just cause for anxiety? Are not Henry and George, our beloved sons, at this very moment perhaps engaged in doubtful contest with our hereditary foe, Count Roderic of Maltingen?

Rud. Now, there lies the difference: you sorrow that they are in danger, I that I cannot share it with them.—Hark! I hear horses' feet on the drawbridge. Go to the window, Isabella.

Isa. [*at the window.*] It is Wickerd, your squire.

Rud. Then shall we have tidings of George and Henry. [*Enter Wickerd.*] How now, Wickerd? Have you come to blows yet?

Wic. Not yet, noble sir.

Rud. Not yet?—shame on the boys' dallying—what wait they for?

Wic. The foe is strongly posted, sir knight, upon the Wolfshill, near the ruins of Griefenhaus; therefore your noble son, George of Aspen, greets you well, and requests twenty more men-at-arms, and, after they have joined him, he hopes, with the aid of St. Theodore, to send you news of victory.

Rud. [*attempts to rise hastily.*] Saddle my black barb; I will head them myself. [*Sits down.*] A murrain on that stumbling roan! I had forgot my dislocated bones. Call Reynold, Wickerd, and bid him take all whom he can spare from defence of the castle—[*Wickerd is going*]—and ho! Wickerd, carry with you my black barb, and bid George charge upon him. [*Exit Wickerd.*] Now see, Isabella, if I disregard the boy's safety; I send him the best horse ever knight bestrode. When we lay before Ascalon, indeed, I had a bright bay Persian—Thou dost not heed me.

Isa. Forgive me, dear husband; are not our sons in danger? Will not our sins be visited upon them? Is not their present situation——

Rud. Situation? I know it well: as fair a field for open fight as I ever hunted over: see here—[*makes lines on the table*]—here is the ancient castle of Griefenhaus in ruins, here the Wolfshill; and here the marsh on the right.

Isa. The marsh of Griefenhaus!

Rud. Yes; by that the boys must pass.

Isa. Pass there! [*Apart.*] Avenging Heaven! thy hand is upon us!

[*Exit hastily.*

Rud. Whither now? Whither now? She is gone. Thus it goes. Peter! Peter! [*Enter Peter.*] Help me to the gallery, that I may see them on horseback.

[*Exit, leaning on Peter.*

Scene II.

The inner court of the castle of Ebersdorf; a quadrangle, surrounded with Gothic buildings; troopers, followers of Rudiger, pass and repass in haste, as if preparing for an excursion.

Wickerd *comes forward*

Wic. What, ho! Reynold! Reynold!—By our Lady, the spirit of the Seven Sleepers is upon him—So ho! not mounted yet? Reynold!

Enter Reynold

Rey. Here! here! A devil choke thy bawling! think'st thou old Reynold is not as ready for a skirmish as thou?

Wic. Nay, nay: I did but jest; but, by my sooth, it were a shame should our youngsters have yoked with Count Roderic before we greybeards come.

Rey. Heaven forfend! Our troopers are but saddling their horses; five minutes more, and we are in our stirrups, and then let Count Roderic sit fast.

Wic. A plague on him! he has ever lain hard on the skirts of our noble master.

Rey. Especially since he was refused the hand of our lady's niece, the pretty Lady Gertrude.

Wic. Ay, marry! would nothing less serve the fox of Maltingen than the lovely lamb of our young Baron Henry! By my sooth, Reynold, when I look upon these two lovers, they make me full twenty years younger; and when I meet the man that would divide them—I say nothing—but let him look to it.

Rey. And how fare our young lords?

Wic. Each well in his humour.—Baron George stern and cold, according to his wont, and his brother as cheerful as ever.

Rey. Well!—Baron Henry for me.

Wic. Yet George saved thy life.

Rey. True—with as much in-

difference as if he had been snatching a chestnut out of the fire. Now Baron Henry wept for my danger and my wounds. Therefore George shall ever command my life, but Henry my love.

Wic. Nay, Baron George shows his gloomy spirit even by the choice of a favourite.

Rey. Ay—Martin, formerly the squire of Arnolf of Ebersdorf, his mother's first husband.—I marvel he could not have fitted himself with an attendant from among the faithful followers of his worthy father, whom Arnolf and his adherents used to hate as the Devil hates holy water. But Martin is a good soldier, and has stood toughly by George in many a hard brunt.

Wic. The knave is sturdy enough, but so sulky withal—I have seen, brother Reynold, that when Martin showed his moody visage at the banquet, our noble mistress has dropped the wine she was raising to her lips, and exchanged her smiles for a ghastly frown, as if sorrow went by sympathy, as kissing goes by favour.

Rey. His appearance reminds her of her first husband, and thou hast well seen *that* makes her ever sad.

Wic. Dost thou marvel at that? She was married to Arnolf by a species of force, and they say that before his death he compelled her to swear never to espouse Rudiger. The priests will not absolve her for the breach of that vow, and therefore she is troubled in mind. For, d'ye mark me, Reynold——

[*Bugle sounds.*

Rey. A truce to your preaching! To horse! and a blessing on our arms!

Wic. St. George grant it! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The gallery of the castle, terminating in a large balcony commanding a distant prospect.—Voices, bugle-horns, kettle-drums, trampling of horses, etc., are heard without.

Rudiger, *leaning on* Peter, *looks from the balcony.* Gertrude *and* Isabella *are near him.*

Rud. There they go at length—look, Isabella! look, my pretty Gertrude—these are the iron-handed warriors who shall tell Roderic what it will cost him to force thee from my protection—[*Flourish without. Rudiger stretches his arms from the balcony.*] Go, my children, and God's blessing with you. Look at my black barb, Gertrude. That horse shall let daylight in through a phalanx, were it twenty pikes deep. Shame on it that I cannot mount him! Seest thou how fierce old Reynold looks?

Ger. I can hardly know my friends in their armour.

[*The bugles and kettle-drums are heard as at a greater distance.*

Rud. Now I could tell every one of their names, even at this distance; ay, and were they covered, as I have seen them, with dust and blood. He on the dapple-grey is Wickerd—a hardy fellow, but somewhat given to prating. That is young Conrad who gallops so fast, page to thy Henry, my girl.

[*Bugles, etc., at a greater distance still.*

Ger. Heaven guard them. Alas! the voice of war that calls the blood into your cheeks chills and freezes mine.

Rud. Say not so. It is glorious, my girl, glorious! See how their armour glistens as they wind round yon hill! how their spears glimmer amid the long train of dust. Hark! you can still hear the faint notes of their trumpets—[*Bugles very faint.*]—And Rudiger, old Rudiger with the iron arm, as the crusaders used to call me, must remain behind with the priests and the women. Well! well!—[*Sings.*]

"It was a knight to battle rode,
And as his war-horse he bestrode."

Fill me a bowl of wine, Gertrude; and do thou, Peter, call the minstrel who came hither last night.—[*Sings.*]

"Off rode the horseman, dash, sa, sa!
And stroked his whiskers, tra, la, la."—

[*Peter goes out.—Rudiger sits down, and Gertrude helps him with wine.*]

Thanks, my love. It tastes ever best from thy hand. Isabella, here is glory and victory to our boys—[*Drinks.*]—Wilt thou not pledge me?

Isa. To their safety, and God grant it!—[*Drinks.*]

Enter BERTRAM *as a minstrel, with a boy bearing his harp.—Also* PETER.

Rud. Thy name, minstrel!

Ber. Minhold, so please you.

Rud. Art thou a German!

Ber. Yes, noble sir; and of this province.

Rud. Sing me a song of battle.

[*Bertram sings to the harp.*

Rud. Thanks, minstrel: well sung, and lustily. What sayst thou, Isabella?

Isa. I marked him not.

Rud. Nay, in sooth you are too anxious. Cheer up. And thou, too, my lovely Gertrude: in a few hours thy Henry shall return, and twine his laurels into a garland for thy hair. He fights for thee, and he must conquer.

Ger. Alas! must blood be spilled for a silly maiden?

Rud. Surely: for what should knights break lances but for honour and ladies' love—ha, minstrel?

Ber. So please you—also to punish crimes.

Rud. Out upon it! wouldst have us executioners, minstrel? Such work would disgrace our blades. We leave malefactors to the Secret Tribunal.

Isa. Merciful God! Thou hast spoken a word, Rudiger, of dreadful import.

Ger. They say that, unknown and invisible themselves, these awful judges are ever present with the guilty; that the past and the present misdeeds, the secrets of the confessional, nay, the very thoughts of the heart, are before them; that their doom is as sure as that of fate, the means and executioners unknown.

Rud. They say true—the secrets of that association, and the names of those who compose it, are as inscrutable as the grave: we only know that it has taken deep root, and spread its branches wide. I sit down each day in my hall, nor know I how many of these secret judges may surround me, all bound by the most solemn vow to avenge guilt. Once, and but once, a knight, at the earnest request and inquiries of the emperor, hinted that he belonged to the society: the next morning he was found slain in a forest: the poniard was left in the wound, and bore this label—"Thus do the invisible judges punish treachery."

Ger. Gracious! aunt, you grow pale.

Isa. A slight indisposition only.

Rud. And what of it all? We know our hearts are open to our Creator: shall we fear any earthly inspection? Come to the battlements; there we shall soonest descry the return of our warriors.

[*Exit Rudiger, with Gertrude and Peter.*

Isa. Minstrel, send the chaplain hither. [*Exit Bertram.*] Gracious Heaven! the guileless innocence of my niece, the manly honesty of my upright-hearted Rudiger, become daily tortures to me. While he was engaged in active and stormy exploits, fear for his safety, joy when he returned to his castle, enabled me to disguise my inward anguish from others. But from myself—Judges of blood, that lie concealed in noontide as in midnight, who boast to avenge the hidden guilt, and to penetrate the recesses of the human breast, how blind is your penetration, how vain your dagger, and your cord, compared to the conscience of the sinner!

Enter FATHER LUDOVIC

Lud. Peace be with you, lady!

Isa. It is not with me: it is thy office to bring it.

Lud. And the cause is the absence of the young knights?

Isa. Their absence and their danger.

Lud. Daughter, thy hand has been stretched out in bounty to the sick and to the needy. Thou hast not denied a shelter to the weary, nor a tear to the afflicted. Trust in their

prayers, and in those of the holy convent thou hast founded; peradventure they will bring back thy children to thy bosom.

Isa. Thy brethren cannot pray for me or mine. Their vow binds them to pray night and day for another—to supplicate, without ceasing, the Eternal Mercy for the soul of one who—Oh, only Heaven knows how much he needs their prayer!

Lud. Unbounded is the mercy of Heaven. The soul of thy former husband——

Isa. I charge thee, priest, mention not the word. [*Apart.*] Wretch that I am, the meanest menial in my train has power to goad me to madness!

Lud. Hearken to me, daughter; thy crime against Arnolf of Ebersdorf cannot bear in the eye of Heaven so deep a dye of guilt.

Isa. Repeat that once more; say once again that it cannot—cannot bear so deep a dye. Prove to me that ages of the bitterest penance, that tears of the dearest blood, can erase such guilt. Prove but *that* to me, and I will build thee an abbey which shall put to shame the fairest fane in Christendom.

Lud. Nay, nay, daughter, your conscience is over tender. Supposing that, under dread of the stern Arnolf, you swore never to marry your present husband, still the exacting such an oath was unlawful, and the breach of it venial.

Isa. [*resuming her composure.*] Be it so, good father; I yield to thy better reasons. And now tell me, has thy pious care achieved the task I intrusted to thee?

Lud. Of superintending the erection of thy new hospital for pilgrims? I have, noble lady: and last night the minstrel now in the castle lodged there.

Isa. Wherefore came he then to the castle?

Lud. Reynold brought the commands of the Baron.

Isa. Whence comes he, and what is his tale? When he sung before Rudiger, I thought that long before I had heard such tones—seen such a face.

Lud. It is possible you may have seen him, lady, for he boasts to have been known to Arnolf of Ebersdorf, and to have lived formerly in this castle. He inquires much after *Martin*, Arnolf's squire.

Isa. Go, Ludovic—go quick, good father, seek him out, give him this purse, and bid him leave the castle, and speed him on his way.

Lud. May I ask why, noble lady?

Isa. Thou art inquisitive, priest: I honour the servants of God, but I foster not the prying spirit of a monk. Begone!

Lud. But the Baron, lady, will expect a reason why I dismiss his guest?

Isa. True, true [*recollecting herself*]; pardon my warmth, good father, I was thinking of the cuckoo that grows too big for the nest of the sparrow, and strangles its foster-mother. Do no such birds roost in convent-wall?

Lud. Lady, I understand you not.

Isa. Well, then, say to the Baron, that I have dismissed long ago all the attendants of the man of whom thou hast spoken, and that I wish to have none of them beneath my roof.

Lud. [*inquisitively.*] Except Martin?

Isa. [*sharply.*] Except Martin! who saved the life of my son George? Do as I command thee. [*Exit.*

Manet Ludovic

Lud. Ever the same—stern and peremptory to others as rigorous to herself; haughty even to me, to whom, in another mood, she has knelt for absolution, and whose knees she has bathed in tears. I cannot fathom her. The unnatural zeal with which she performs her dreadful penances cannot be religion, for shrewdly I guess she believes not in their blessed efficacy. Well for her that she is the foundress of our convent, otherwise we might not have erred in denouncing her as a heretic! [*Exit.*

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A woodland prospect.—Through a long avenue, half grown up by brambles, are discerned in the back-ground the ruins of the ancient Castle of Griefenhaus.—The distant noise of battle is heard during this scene.

Enter GEORGE OF ASPEN, *armed with a battle-axe in his hand, as from horseback. He supports* MARTIN, *and brings him forward.*

Geo. Lay thee down here, old friend. The enemy's horsemen will hardly take their way among these brambles, through which I have dragged thee.

Mar. Oh, do not leave me! leave me not an instant! My moments are now but few, and I would profit by them.

Geo. Martin, you forget yourself and me—I must back to the field.

Mar. [*attempts to rise.*] Then drag me back thither also; I cannot die but in your presence—I dare not be alone. Stay, to give peace to my parting soul.

Geo. I am no priest, Martin. [*Going.*]

Mar. [*raising himself with great pain.*] Baron George of Aspen, I saved thy life in battle: for that good deed, hear me but one moment.

Geo. I hear thee, my poor friend. [*Returning.*]

Mar. But come close—very close. See'st thou, sir knight—this wound I bore for thee—and this—and this—dost thou not remember?

Geo. I do.

Mar. I have served thee since thou wast a child; served thee faithfully—was never from thy side.

Geo. Thou hast.

Mar. And now I die in thy service.

Geo. Thou may'st recover.

Mar. I cannot. By my long service—by my scars—by this mortal gash, and by the death that I am to die—oh, do not hate me for what I am now to unfold!

Geo. Be assured I can never hate thee.

Mar. Ah, thou little knowest—Swear to me thou wilt speak a word of comfort to my parting soul.

Geo. [*takes his hand.*] I swear I will. [*Alarm and shouting.*] But be brief—thou knowest my haste.

Mar. Hear me, then. I was the squire, the beloved and favourite attendant, of Arnolf of Ebersdorf. Arnolf was savage as the mountain bear. He loved the Lady Isabel, but she requited not his passion. She loved thy father; but her sire, old Arnheim, was the friend of Arnolf, and she was forced to marry him. By midnight, in the chapel of Ebersdorf, the ill-omened rites were performed; her resistance, her screams were in vain. These arms detained her at the altar till the nuptial benediction was pronounced. Canst thou forgive me?

Geo. I do forgive thee. Thy obedience to thy savage master has been obliterated by a long train of services to his widow.

Mar. Services! ay, bloody services! for they commenced—do not quit my hand—they commenced with the murder of my master. [*George quits his hand, and stands aghast in speechless horror.*] Trample on me! pursue me with your dagger! I aided your mother to poison her first husband! I thank Heaven, it is said.

Geo. My mother? Sacred Heaven! Martin, thou ravest—the fever of thy wound has distracted thee.

Mar. No! I am not mad! Would to God I were! Try me! Yonder is the Wolfshill—yonder the old castle of Griefenhaus—and yonder is the hemlock marsh [*in a whisper*] where I gathered the deadly plant that drugged Arnolf's cup of death. [*George traverses the stage in the utmost agitation, and sometimes stands over Martin with his hands clasped together.*] Oh, had you seen him when the potion took effect! Had you heard his ravings, and seen the contortions of his ghastly visage!—He died furious and impenitent, as he lived; and went—where I am shortly to go. You do not speak?

Geo. [*with exertion.*] Miserable wretch! how can I?

Mar. Can you not forgive me?

Geo. May God pardon thee—I cannot!

Mar. I saved thy life——

Geo. For that, take my curse! [*He snatches up his battle-axe, and rushes out to the side from which the noise is heard.*]

Mar. Hear me! yet more—more horror! [*Attempts to rise, and falls heavily. A loud alarm.*]

Enter WICKERD, *hastily.*

Wic. In the name of God, Martin, lend me thy brand!

Mar. Take it.

Wic. Where is it?

Mar. [*looks wildly at him.*] In the chapel at Ebersdorf, or buried in the hemlock marsh.

Wic. The old grumbler is crazy with his wounds. Martin, if thou hast a spark of reason in thee, give me thy sword. The day goes sore against us.

Mar. There it lies. Bury it in the heart of thy master George; thou wilt do him a good office—the office of a faithful servant.

Enter CONRAD.

Con. Away, Wickerd! to horse, and pursue! Baron George has turned the day; he fights more like a fiend than a man: he has unhorsed Roderic, and slain six of his troopers—they are in headlong flight—the hemlock marsh is red with their gore! [*Martin gives a deep groan, and faints.*] Away! away! [*They hurry off, as to the pursuit.*]

Enter RODERIC OF MALTINGEN, *without his helmet, his arms disordered and broken, holding the truncheon of a spear in his hand; with him,* BARON WOLFSTEIN.

Rod. A curse on fortune, and a double curse upon George of Aspen! Never, never will I forgive him my disgrace—overthrown like a rotten trunk before a whirlwind!

Wolf. Be comforted, Count Roderic; it is well we have escaped being prisoners. See how the troopers of Aspen pour along the plain, like the billows of the Rhine! It is good we are shrouded by the thicket.

Rod. Why took he not my life, when he robbed me of my honour and of my love? Why did his spear not pierce my heart, when mine shivered on his arms like a frail bulrush? [*Throws down the broken spear.*] Bear witness, heaven and earth, I outlive this disgrace only to avenge!

Wolf. Be comforted; the knights of Aspen have not gained a bloodless victory. And see, there lies one of George's followers—[*seeing Martin.*]

Rod. His squire Martin; if he be not dead, we will secure him: he is the depositary of the secrets of his master. Arouse thee, trusty follower of the house of Aspen!

Mar. [*reviving.*] Leave me not! leave me not, Baron George! my eyes are darkened with agony! I have not yet told all.

Wolf. The old man takes you for his master.

Rod. What wouldst thou tell?

Mar. Oh, I would tell all the temptations by which I was urged to the murder of Ebersdorf!

Rod. Murder!—this is worth marking. Proceed.

Mar. I loved a maiden, daughter of Arnolf's steward; my master seduced her—she became an outcast, and died in misery—I vowed vengeance—and I did avenge her.

Rod. Hadst thou accomplices?

Mar. None, but thy mother.

Rod. The Lady Isabella!

Mar. Ay: she hated her husband: he knew her love to Rudiger, and when she heard that thy father was returned from Palestine, her life was endangered by the transports of his jealousy—thus prepared for evil, the fiend tempted us, and we fell.

Rod. [*breaks into a transport.*] Fortune! thou hast repaid me all! Love and vengeance are my own!—Wolfstein, recall our followers! quick, sound thy bugle—[*Wolfstein sounds.*]

Mar. [*stares wildly round.*] That was no note of Aspen—Count Roderic of Maltingen — Heaven! what have I said!

Rod. What thou canst not recall.

Mar. Then is my fate decreed! 'Tis as it should be! in this very place was the poison gather'd—'tis retribution!

Enter three or four soldiers of RODERIC.

Rod. Secure this wounded trooper;

bind his wounds, and guard him well; carry him to the ruins of Griefenhaus, and conceal him till the troopers of Aspen have retired from the pursuit;—look to him, as you love your lives.

Mar. [*led off by soldiers.*] Ministers of vengeance! my hour is come! [*Exeunt.*

Rod. Hope, joy, and triumph, once again are ye mine! Welcome to my heart, long-absent visitants! One lucky chance has thrown dominion into the scale of the house of Maltingen, and Aspen kicks the beam.

Wolf. I foresee, indeed, dishonour to the family of Aspen, should this wounded squire make good his tale.

Rod. And how thinkest thou this disgrace will fall on them?

Wolf. Surely, by the public punishment of Lady Isabella.

Rod. And is that all?

Wolf. What more?

Rod. Shortsighted that thou art, is not George of Aspen, as well as thou, a member of the holy and invisible circle, over which I preside?

Wolf. Speak lower, for God's sake! these are things not to be mentioned before the sun.

Rod. True: but stands he not bound by the most solemn oath religion can devise, to discover to the tribunal whatever concealed iniquity shall come to his knowledge, be the perpetrator whom he may—ay, were that perpetrator his own father—or mother; and can you doubt that he has heard Martin's confession?

Wolf. True: but, blessed Virgin! do you think he will accuse his own mother before the invisible judges?

Rod. If not, he becomes forsworn, and, by our law, must die. Either way my vengeance is complete—perjured or parricide, I care not; but as the one or the other shall I crush the haughty George of Aspen.

Wolf. Thy vengeance strikes deep.

Rod. Deep as the wounds I have borne from this proud family. Rudiger slew my father in battle—George has twice baffled and dishonoured my arms, and Henry has stolen the heart of my beloved: but no longer can Gertrude now remain under the care of the murderous dam of this brood of wolves; far less can she wed the smooth-cheeked boy, when this scene of villainy shall be disclosed. [*Bugle.*

Wolf. Hark! they sound a retreat: let us go deeper into the wood.

Rod. The victors approach! I shall dash their triumph!—Issue the private summons for convoking the members this very evening; I will direct the other measures.

Wolf. What place?

Rod. The old chapel in the ruins of Griefenhaus, as usual. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Enter George of Aspen, *as from the pursuit.*

Geo. [*comes slowly forward.*] How many wretches have sunk under my arm this day, to whom life was sweet, though the wretched bondsmen of Count Roderic! And I—I who sought death beneath every lifted battle-axe, and offered my breast to every arrow—I am cursed with victory and safety. Here I left the wretch——Martin!—Martin!—what, ho! Martin!——Mother of God! he is gone! Should he repeat the dreadful tale to any other——Martin!—He answers not. Perhaps he has crept into the thicket, and died there—were it so, the horrible secret is only mine.

Enter Henry of Aspen, *with* Wickerd, Reynold, *and followers.*

Hen. Joy to thee, brother! though, by St. Francis, I would not gain another field at the price of seeing thee fight with such reckless desperation. Thy safety is little less than miraculous.

Rey. By'r Lady, when Baron George struck, I think he must have forgot that his foes were God's creatures. Such furious doings I never saw, and I have been a trooper these forty-two years come St. Barnaby——

Geo. Peace! Saw any of you Martin?

Wic. Noble sir, I left him here not long since.

Geo. Alive or dead?

Wic. Alive, noble sir, but sorely

wounded. I think he must be prisoner, for he could not have budged else from hence.

Geo. Heedless slave! Why didst thou leave him?

Hen. Dear brother, Wickerd acted for the best: he came to our assistance and the aid of his companions.

Geo. I tell thee, Henry, Martin's safety was of more importance than the lives of any ten that stand here.

Wic. [*muttering.*] Here's much to do about an old crazy trencher-shifter.

Geo. What mutterest thou?

Wic. Only, sir knight, that Martin seemed out of his senses when I left him, and has perhaps wandered into the marsh, and perished there.

Geo. How—out of his senses? Did he speak to thee?—[*apprehensively.*]

Wic. Yes, noble sir.

Geo. Dear Henry, step for an instant to yon tree—thou wilt see from thence if the foe rally upon the Wolfshill. [*Henry retires.*] And do you stand back [*to the soldiers*].

[*He brings Wickerd forward.*

Geo. [*with marked apprehension.*] What did Martin say to thee, Wickerd?—tell me, on thy allegiance.

Wic. Mere ravings, sir knight—offered me his sword to kill you.

Geo. Said he aught of killing any one else?

Wic. No: the pain of his wound seemed to have brought on a fever.

Geo. [*clasps his hands together.*] I breathe again—I spy comfort. Why could I not see as well as this fellow, that the wounded wretch may have been distracted? Let me at least think so till proof shall show the truth [*aside*]. Wickerd, think not on what I said—the heat of the battle had chafed my blood. Thou hast wished for the Nether farm at Ebersdorf—it shall be thine.

Wic. Thanks, my noble lord.

Re-enter HENRY.

Hen. No—they do not rally—they have had enough of it—but Wickerd and Conrad shall remain, with twenty troopers and a score of cross-bowmen, and scour the woods towards Griefenhaus, to prevent the fugitives from making head. We will, with the rest, to Ebersdorf. What say you, brother?

Geo. Well ordered. Wickerd, look thou search everywhere for Martin: bring him to me dead or alive; leave not a nook of the wood unsought.

Wic. I warrant you, noble sir, I shall find him, could he clew himself up like a dormouse.

Hen. I think he must be prisoner.

Geo. Heaven forfend! Take a trumpet, Eustace [*to an attendant*]; ride to the castle of Maltingen, and demand a parley. If Martin is prisoner, offer any ransom: offer ten—twenty—all our prisoners in exchange.

Eus. It shall be done, sir knight.

Hen. Ere we go, sound trumpets—strike up the song of victory.

SONG

Joy to the victors! the sons of old Aspen!
Joy to the race of the battle and scar!
Glory's proud garland triumphantly grasping;
Generous in peace, and victorious in war.
Honour acquiring,
Valour inspiring,
Bursting, resistless, through foemen they go:
War-axes wielding,
Broken ranks yielding,
Till from the battle proud Roderic retiring,
Yields in wild rout the fair palm to his foe.
Joy to each warrior, true follower of Aspen!
Joy to the heroes that gain'd the bold day!
Health to our wounded, in agony gasping;
Peace to our brethren that fell in the fray!
Boldly this morning,
Roderic's power scorning,
Well for their chieftain their blades did they wield:
Joy blest them dying,
As Maltingen flying,
Low laid his banners, our conquest adorning,
Their death-clouded eyeballs descried on the field!

Now to our home, the proud mansion of Aspen,
Bend we, gay victors, triumphant away;
There each fond damsel, her gallant youth clasping,
Shall wipe from his forehead the stains of the fray.
Listening the prancing
Of horses advancing;
E'en now on the turrets our maidens appear.
Love our hearts warming,
Songs the night charming,
Round goes the grape in the goblet gay dancing;
Love, wine, and song, our blithe evening shall cheer!

Hen. Now spread our banners, and to Ebersdorf in triumph. We carry relief to the anxious, joy to the heart of the aged, brother George. [*Going off.*]

Geo. Or treble misery and death. [*Apart, and following slowly.*

The music sounds, and the followers of Aspen begin to file across the stage. The curtain falls.

ACT III.—Scene I.

Castle of Ebersdorf.

Rudiger, Isabella, *and* Gertrude.

Rud. I prithee, dear wife, be merry. It must be over by this time, and happily, otherwise the bad news had reached us.

Isa. Should we not, then, have heard the tidings of the good?

Rud. Oh! these fly slower by half. Besides, I warrant all of them engaged in the pursuit. Oh! not a page would leave the skirts of the fugitives till they were fairly beaten into their holds; but had the boys lost the day, the stragglers had made for the castle. Go to the window, Gertrude: seest thou anything?

Ger. I think I see a horseman.

Isa. A single rider? then I fear me much.

Ger. It is only Father Ludovic.

Rud. A plague on thee! didst thou take a fat friar on a mule for a trooper of the house of Aspen?

Ger. But yonder is a cloud of dust.

Rud. [*eagerly.*] Indeed!

Ger. It is only the wine sledges going to my aunt's convent.

Rud. The devil confound the wine sledges, and the mules, and the monks! Come from the window, and torment me no longer, thou seer of strange sights.

Ger. Dear uncle, what can I do to amuse you? Shall I tell you what I dreamed this morning?

Rud. Nonsense: but say on; anything is better than silence.

Ger. I thought I was in the chapel, and they were burying my aunt Isabella alive. And who, do you think, aunt, were the gravediggers who shovelled in the earth upon you? Even Baron George and old Martin.

Isa. [*appears shocked.*] Heaven! what an idea!

Ger. Do but think of my terror—and Minhold the minstrel played all the while to drown your screams.

Rud. And old Father Ludovic danced a saraband, with the steeple of the new convent upon his thick skull by way of mitre. A truce to this nonsense. Give us a song, my love, and leave thy dreams and visions.

Ger. What shall I sing to you?

Rud. Sing to me of war.

Ger. I cannot sing of battle; but I will sing you the Lament of Eleanor of Toro, when her lover was slain in the wars.

Isa. Oh, no laments, Gertrude.

Rud. Then sing a song of mirth.

Isa. Dear husband, is this a time for mirth?

Rud. Is it neither a time to sing of mirth nor of sorrow? Isabella would rather hear Father Ludovic chant the "De profundis."

Ger. Dear uncle, be not angry. At present, I can only sing the lay of poor Eleanor. It comes to my heart at this moment as if the sorrowful mourner had been my own sister.

SONG

Sweet shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
Weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
As a fair maiden, bewilder'd in sorrow,
Sigh'd to the breezes and wept to the flood.—
"Saints, from the mansion of bliss lowly bending,
Virgin, that hear'st the poor suppliant's cry,
Grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
My Frederick restore, or let Eleanor die."

Distant and faint were the sounds of the battle;
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed through the woodland so dreary,
Slowly approaching, a warrior was seen;
Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and woe was his mien.

"Save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying;
Save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low;
Cold on yon heath thy bold Frederick is lying,
Fast through the woodland approaches the foe."
[*The voice of Gertrude sinks by degrees, till she bursts into tears.*

Rud. How now, Gertrude?

Ger. Alas! may not the fate of poor Eleanor at this moment be mine?

Rud. Never, my girl, never! [*Military music is heard.*] Hark! hark! to the sounds that tell thee so. [*All rise and run to the window.*

Rud. Joy! joy! they come, and come victorious. [*The chorus of the war-song is heard without.*] Welcome! welcome! once more have my old eyes seen the banners of the house of Maltingen trampled in the dust. —Isabella, broach our oldest casks: wine is sweet after war.

Enter HENRY, *followed by* REYNOLD *and troopers*

Rud. Joy to thee, my boy: let me press thee to this old heart.

Isa. Bless thee, my son—[*embraces him*]—Oh, how many hours of bitterness are compensated by this embrace! Bless thee, my Henry! where hast thou left thy brother?

Hen. Hard at hand: by this he is crossing the drawbridge. Hast thou no greetings for me, Gertrude? [*Goes to her.*]

Ger. I joy not in battles.

Rud. But she had tears for thy danger.

Hen. Thanks, my gentle Gertrude. See, I have brought back thy scarf from no inglorious field.

Ger. It is bloody!—[*shocked.*]

Rud. Dost start at that, my girl? Were it his own blood, as it is that of his foes, thou shouldst glory in it. —Go, Reynold, make good cheer with thy fellows.

[*Exit Reynold and Soldiers.*

Enter GEORGE *pensively.*

Geo. [*goes straight to Rudiger.*] Father, thy blessing.

Rud. Thou hast it, boy.

Isa. [*rushes to embrace him—he avoids her.*] How? art thou wounded?

Geo. No.

Rud. Thou lookest deadly pale.

Geo. It is nothing.

Isa. Heaven's blessing on my gallant George.

Geo. [*aside.*] Dares she bestow a blessing? Oh, Martin's tale was frenzy!

Isa. Smile upon us for once, my son; darken not thy brow on this day of gladness—few are our moments of joy—should not my sons share in them?

Geo. [*aside.*] She has moments of joy—it *was* frenzy then!

Isa. Gertrude, my love, assist me to disarm the knight. [*She loosens and takes off his casque.*]

Ger. There is one, two, three hacks, and none has pierced the steel.

Rud. Let me see. Let me see. A trusty casque!

Ger. Else hadst thou gone.

Isa. I will reward the armourer with its weight in gold.

Geo. [*aside.*] She *must* be innocent.

Ger. And Henry's shield is hacked, too! Let me show it to you, uncle. [*She carries Henry's to Rudiger.*]

Rud. Do, my love; and come hither, Henry, thou shalt tell me how the day went.

[*Henry and Gertrude converse apart with Rudiger; George comes forward; Isabella comes to him.*

Isa. Surely, George, some evil has befallen thee. Grave thou art ever, but so dreadfully gloomy—

Geo. Evil, indeed.—[*Aside.*] Now for the trial.

Isa. Has your loss been great?

Geo. No!—Yes!—[*Apart.*] I cannot do it.

Isa. Perhaps some friend lost?

Geo. It must be.—*Martin is dead.*—[*He regards her with apprehension, but steadily, as he pronounces these words.*]

Isa. [*starts, then shows a ghastly expression of joy.*] Dead!

Geo. [*almost overcome by his feelings.*] Guilty! Guilty!—[*apart.*]

Isa. [*without observing his emotion.*] Didst thou say dead?

Geo. Did I—no—I only said mortally wounded.

Isa. Wounded? only wounded? Where is he? Let me fly to him.—[*Going.*]

Geo. [*sternly.*] Hold, lady!—Speak not so loud!—Thou canst not see him!—He is a prisoner.

Isa. A prisoner, and wounded? Fly to his deliverance!—Offer wealth, lands, castles,—all our possessions, for his ransom. Never shall I know peace till these walls, or till the grave secures him.

Geo. [*apart.*] Guilty! Guilty!

Enter PETER.

Pet. Hugo, squire to the Count of Maltingen, has arrived with a message.

Rud. I will receive him in the hall.

[*Exit, leaning on Gertrude and Henry.*

Isa. Go, George—see after Martin.

Geo. [*firmly.*] No—I have a task to perform; and though the earth should open and devour me alive—I will accomplish it. But first—but first—Nature, take thy tribute.—[*He falls on his mother's neck, and weeps bitterly.*]

Isa. George! my son! for Heaven's sake, what dreadful frenzy!

Geo. [*walks two turns across the stage and composes himself.*] Listen, mother—I knew a knight in Hungary, gallant in battle, hospitable and generous in peace. The king gave him his friendship, and the administration of a province; that province was infested by thieves and murderers. You mark me?—

Isa. Most heedfully.

Geo. The knight was sworn—bound by an oath the most dreadful than can be taken by man—to deal among offenders, evenhanded, stern and impartial justice. Was it not a dreadful vow?

Isa. [*with an affectation of composure.*] Solemn, doubtless, as the oath of every magistrate.

Geo. And inviolable?

Isa. Surely—inviolable.

Geo. Well! it happened, that when he rode out against the banditti, he made a prisoner. And who, think you, that prisoner was?

Isa. I know not [*with increasing terror.*]

Geo. [*trembling, but proceeding rapidly.*] His own twin-brother, who sucked the same breasts with him, and lay in the bosom of the same mother; his brother whom he loved as his own soul—what should that knight have done unto his brother?

Isa. [*almost speechless.*] Alas! what did he do?

Geo. He did [*turning his head from her, and with clasped hands*] what I can never do:—he did his duty.

Isa. My son! my son!—Mercy! Mercy! [*Clings to him.*]

Geo. Is it then true?

Isa. What?

Geo. What Martin said? [*Isabella hides her face.*] It is true!

Isa. [*looks up with an air of dignity.*] Hear, Framer of the laws of nature! the mother is judged by the child—[*Turns towards him.*]

Yes, it is true—true that, fearful of my own life, I secured it by the murder of my tyrant. Mistaken coward! I little knew on what terrors I ran, to avoid one moment's agony—Thou hast the secret!

Geo. Knowest thou to whom thou hast told it?

Isa. To my son.

Geo. No! No! to an executioner!

Isa. Be it so—go, proclaim my crime, and forget not my punishment. Forget not that the murderess of her husband has dragged out years of hidden remorse, to be brought at last to the scaffold by her own cherished son—thou art silent.

Geo. The language of Nature is no more! How shall I learn another?

Isa. Look upon me, George. Should the executioner be abashed before the criminal—look upon me, my son. From my soul do I forgive thee.

Geo. Forgive me what?

Isa. What thou dost meditate—be vengeance heavy, but let it be secret—add not the death of a father to that of the sinner! Oh! Rudiger! Rudiger! innocent cause of all my guilt and all my woe, how wilt thou tear thy silver locks when thou shalt hear her guilt whom thou hast so often clasped to thy bosom—hear her infamy proclaimed by the son of thy fondest hopes—[*weeps.*]

Geo. [*struggling for breath.*] Nature will have utterance: mother, dearest mother, I will save you or perish! [*throws himself into her arms.*] Thus fall my vows.

Isa. Man thyself! I ask not safety from thee. Never shall it be said, that Isabella of Aspen turned her son from the path of duty, though his footsteps must pass over her mangled corpse. Man thyself.

Geo. No! No! The ties of Nature were knit by God himself. Cursed be the stoic pride that would rend them asunder, and call it virtue!

Isa. My son! My son!—How shall I behold thee hereafter?

[*Three knocks are heard upon the door of the apartment.*

Geo. Hark! One — two — three. Roderic, thou art speedy! [*Apart.*]

Isa. [*opens the door.*] A parchment stuck to the door with a poniard! [*Opens it.*] Heaven and earth!—a summons from the invisible judges!—[*Drops the parchment.*]

Geo. [*reads with emotion.*] "Isabella of Aspen, accused of murder by poison, we conjure thee, by the cord and by the steel, to appear this night before the avengers of blood, who judge in secret and avenge in secret, like the Deity. As thou art innocent or guilty, so be thy deliverance."—Martin, Martin, thou hast played false!

Isa. Alas! whither shall I fly?

Geo. Thou canst not fly; instant death would follow the attempt; a hundred thousand arms would be raised against thy life; every morsel thou didst taste, every drop which thou didst drink, the very breeze of heaven that fanned thee, would come loaded with destruction. One chance of safety is open:—obey the summons.

Isa. And perish.—Yet why should I still fear death? Be it so.

Geo. No—I have sworn to save you. I will not do the work by halves. Does any one save Martin know of the dreadful deed?

Isa. None.

Geo. Then go—assert your innocence, and leave the rest to me.

Isa. Wretch that I am! How can I support the task you would impose?

Geo. Think on my father. Live for him: he will need all the comfort thou canst bestow. Let the thought that his destruction is involved in thine, carry thee through the dreadful trial.

Isa. Be it so.—For Rudiger I have lived: for him I will continue to bear the burden of existence: but the instant that my guilt comes to his knowledge shall be the last of my life. Ere I would bear from him one glance of hatred or of scorn, this dagger should drink my blood. [*Puts the poniard into her bosom.*]

Geo. Fear not. He can never know. No evidence shall appear against you.

Isa. How shall I obey the summons, and where find the terrible judgment-seat?

Geo. Leave that to the judges. Resolve but to obey, and a con-

ductor will be found. Go to the chapel; there pray for your sins and for mine. [*He leads her out, and returns.*]—Sins, indeed! I break a dreadful vow, but I save the life of a parent; and the penance I will do for my perjury shall appal even the judges of blood.

Enter REYNOLD.

Rey. Sir knight, the messenger of Count Roderic desires to speak with you.

Geo. Admit him.

Enter HUGO.

Hug. Count Roderic of Maltingen greets you. He says he will this night hear the bat flutter and the owlet scream; and he bids me ask if thou also wilt listen to the music.

Geo. I understand him. I will be there.

Hug. And the count says to you, that he will not ransom your wounded squire, though you would down-weigh his best horse with gold. But you may send him a confessor, for the count says he will need one.

Geo. Is he so near death?

Hug. Not as it seems to me. He is weak through loss of blood; but since his wound was dressed he can both stand and walk. Our count has a notable balsam, which has recruited him much.

Geo. Enough—I will send a priest. —[*Exit Hugo.*] I fathom his plot. He would add another witness to the tale of Martin's guilt. But no priest shall approach him. Reynold, thinkest thou not we could send one of the troopers, disguised as a monk, to aid Martin in making his escape?

Rey. Noble sir, the followers of your house are so well known to those of Maltingen, that I fear it is impossible.

Geo. Knowest thou of no stranger who might be employed? His reward shall exceed even his hopes.

Rey. So please you—I think the minstrel could well execute such a commission: he is shrewd and cunning, and can write and read like a priest.

Geo. Call him.—[*Exit Reynold.*] If this fails, I must employ open force. Were Martin removed, no tongue can assert the bloody truth.

Enter MINSTREL.

Geo. Come hither, Minhold. Hast thou courage to undertake a dangerous enterprise?

Ber. My life, sir Knight, has been one scene of danger and of dread. I have forgotten how to fear.

Geo. Thy speech is above thy seeming. Who art thou?

Ber. An unfortunate knight, obliged to shroud myself under this disguise.

Geo. What is the cause of thy misfortunes?

Ber. I slew, at a tournament, a prince, and was laid under the ban of the empire.

Geo. I have interest with the emperor. Swear to perform what task I shall impose on thee, and I will procure the recall of the ban.

Ber. I swear.

Geo. Then take the disguise of a monk, and go with the follower of Count Roderic, as if to confess my wounded squire Martin. Give him thy dress, and remain in prison in his stead. Thy captivity shall be short, and I pledge my knightly word I will labour to execute my promise, when thou shalt have leisure to unfold thy history.

Ber. I will do as you direct. Is the life of your squire in danger?

Geo. It is, unless thou canst accomplish his release.

Ber. I will essay it. [*Exit.*

Geo. Such are the mean expedients to which George of Aspen must now resort. No longer can I debate with Roderic in the field. The depraved —the perjured knight must contend with him only in the arts of dissimulation and treachery. Oh, mother! mother! the most bitter consequence of thy crime has been the birth of thy first-born! But I must warn my brother of the impending storm. Poor Henry, how little can thy gay temper anticipate evil! What ho, there! [*Enter an Attendant.*] Where is Baron Henry?

Att. Noble sir, he rode forth, after a slight refreshment, to visit the party in the field.

Geo. Saddle my steed; I will follow him.

Att. So please you, your noble father has twice demanded your presence at the banquet.

Geo. It matters not—say that I have ridden forth to the Wolfshill. Where is thy lady?

Att. In the chapel, sir knight.

Geo. 'Tis well—saddle my bay-horse—[*apart*] for the last time.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.—Scene I.

The wood of Griefenhaus, with the ruins of the Castle. A nearer view of the Castle than in Act Second, but still at some distance.

Enter Roderic, Wolfstein, *and Soldiers, as from a reconnoitring party.*

Wolf. They mean to improve their success, and will push their advantage far. We must retreat betimes, Count Roderic.

Rod. We are safe here for the present. They make no immediate motion of advance. I fancy neither George nor Henry are with their party in the wood.

Enter Hugo.

Hug. Noble sir, how shall I tell what has happened?

Rod. What?

Hug. Martin has escaped.

Rod. Villain, thy life shall pay it! [*Strikes at Hugo—is held by Wolfstein.*]

Wolf. Hold, hold, Count Roderic! Hugo may be blameless.

Rod. Reckless slave! how came he to escape?

Hug. Under the disguise of a monk's habit, whom by your orders we brought to confess him.

Rod. Has he been long gone?

Hug. An hour and more since he passed our sentinels, disguised as the chaplain of Aspen: but he walked so slowly and feebly, I think he cannot yet have reached the posts of the enemy.

Rod. Where is the treacherous priest?

Hug. He waits his doom not far from hence. [*Exit Hugo.*

Rod. Drag him hither. The miscreant that snatched the morsel of vengeance from the lion of Maltingen, shall expire under torture.

Re-enter Hugo, *with* Bertram *and Attendants.*

Rod. Villain! what tempted thee, under the garb of a minister of religion, to steal a criminal from the hand of justice?

Ber. I am no villain, Count Roderic; and I only aided the escape of one wounded wretch whom thou didst mean to kill basely.

Rod. Liar and slave! thou hast assisted a murderer, upon whom justice had sacred claims.

Ber. I warn thee again, Count, that I am neither liar nor slave. Shortly I hope to tell thee I am once more thy equal.

Rod. Thou! Thou!——

Ber. Yes! the name of Bertram of Ebersdorf was once not unknown to thee.

Rod. [*astonished.*] Thou Bertram! the brother of Arnolf of Ebersdorf, first husband of the Baroness Isabella of Aspen?

Ber. The same.

Rod. Who, in a quarrel at a tournament, many years since, slew a blood-relation of the emperor, and was laid under the ban?

Ber. The same.

Rod. And who has now, in the disguise of a priest, aided the escape of Martin, squire to George of Aspen?

Ber. The same—the same.

Rod. Then, by the holy cross of Cologne, thou hast set at liberty the murderer of thy brother Arnolf!

Ber. How! What! I understand thee not!

Rod. Miserable plotter!—Martin, by his own confession, as Wolfstein heard, avowed having aided Isabella in the murder of her husband. I had laid such a plan of vengeance as should have made all Germany shudder. And thou hast counteracted it—thou, the brother of the murdered Arnolf!

Ber. Can this be so, Wolfstein?

Wolf. I heard Martin confess the murder.

Ber. Then am I indeed unfortunate!

Rod. What, in the name of evil, brought thee here?

Ber. I am the last of my race. When I was outlawed, as thou knowest, the lands of Ebersdorf, my rightful inheritance, were declared forfeited, and the Emperor bestowed them upon Rudiger when he married Isabella. I attempted to defend my domain, but Rudiger—Hell thank him for it—enforced the ban against me at the head of his vassals, and I was constrained to fly. Since then I have warred against the Saracens in Spain and Palestine.

Rod. But why didst thou return to a land where death attends thy being discovered?

Ber. Impatience urged me to see once more the land of my nativity, and the towers of Ebersdorf. I came there yesterday, under the name of the minstrel Minhold.

Rod. And what prevailed on thee to undertake to deliver Martin?

Ber. George, though I told not my name, engaged to procure the recall of the ban; besides, he told me Martin's life was in danger, and I accounted the old villain to be the last remaining follower of our house. But, as God shall judge me, the tale of horror thou hast mentioned I could not have even suspected. Report ran, that my brother died of the plague.

Wolf. Raised for the purpose, doubtless, of preventing attendance upon his sick-bed, and an inspection of his body.

Ber. My vengeance shall be dreadful as its cause! The usurpers of my inheritance, the robbers of my honour, the murderers of my brother, shall be cut off, root and branch!

Rod. Thou art, then, welcome here; especially if thou art still a true brother to our invisible order.

Ber. I am.

Rod. There is a meeting this night on the business of thy brother's death. Some are now come. I must despatch them in pursuit of Martin.

Enter HUGO.

Hug. The foes advance, sir knight.

Rod. Back! back to the ruins! Come with us, Bertram; on the road thou shalt hear the dreadful history.

[*Exeunt.*

From the opposite side enter GEORGE, HENRY, WICKERD, CONRAD, *and Soldiers.*

Geo. No news of Martin yet?

Wic. None, sir knight.

Geo. Nor of the minstrel?

Wic. None.

Geo. Then he has betrayed me, or is prisoner—misery either way. Begone, and search the wood, Wickerd.

[*Exeunt Wickerd and followers.*

Hen. Still this dreadful gloom on thy brow, brother?

Geo. Ay! what else?

Hen. Once thou thoughtest me worthy of thy friendship.

Geo. Henry, thou art young——

Hen. Shall I therefore betray thy confidence?

Geo. No! but thou art gentle and well-natured. Thy mind cannot even support the burden which mine must bear, far less wilt thou approve the means I shall use to throw it off.

Hen. Try me.

Geo. I may not.

Hen. Then thou dost no longer love me.

Geo. I love thee, and because I love thee, I will not involve thee in my distress.

Hen. I will bear it with thee.

Geo. Shouldst thou share it, it would be doubled to me!

Hen. Fear not, I will find a remedy.

Geo. It would cost thee peace of mind, here, and hereafter.

Hen. I take the risk.

Geo. It may not be, Henry. Thou wouldst become the confidant of crimes past—the accomplice of others to come.

Hen. Shall I guess?

Geo. I charge thee, no!

Hen. I must. Thou art one of the secret judges.

Geo. Unhappy boy! what hast thou said?

Hen. Is it not so?

Geo. Dost thou know what the discovery has cost thee?

Hen. I care not.

Geo. He who discovers any part of our mystery must himself become one of our number.

Hen. How so?

Geo. If he does not consent, his secrecy will be speedily ensured by his death. To that we are sworn—take thy choice!

Hen. Well, are you not banded in secret to punish those offenders whom the sword of justice cannot reach, or who are shielded from its stroke by the buckler of power?

Geo. Such is indeed the purpose of our fraternity; but the end is pursued through paths dark, intricate, and slippery with blood. Who is he that shall tread them with safety? Accursed be the hour in which I entered the labyrinth, and doubly accursed that, in which thou too must lose the cheerful sunshine of a soul without a mystery!

Hen. Yet for thy sake will I be a member.

Geo. Henry, thou didst rise this morning a free man. No one could say to thee, "Why dost thou so?" Thou layest thee down to-night the veriest slave that ever tugged at an oar—the slave of men whose actions will appear to thee savage and incomprehensible, and whom thou must aid against the world, upon peril of thy throat.

Hen. Be it so. I will share your lot.

Geo. Alas, Henry! Heaven forbid! But since thou hast by a hasty word fettered thyself, I will avail myself of thy bondage. Mount thy fleetest steed, and hie thee this very night to the Duke of Bavaria. He is chief and paramount of our chapter. Show him this signet and this letter; tell him that matters will be this night discussed concerning the house of Aspen. Bid him speed him to the assembly, for he well knows the president is our deadly foe. He will admit thee a member of our holy body.

Hen. Who is the foe whom you dread?

Geo. Young man, the first duty thou must learn is implicit and blind obedience.

Hen. Well! I shall soon return and see thee again.

Geo. Return, indeed, thou wilt; but for the rest—well! that matters not.

Hen. I go: thou wilt set a watch here?

Geo. I will. [*Henry going.*] Return, my dear Henry; let me embrace thee, shouldst thou not see me again.

Hen. Heaven! what mean you?

Geo. Nothing. The life of mortals is precarious; and, should we not meet again, take my blessing and this embrace—and this—[*embraces him warmly.*] And now haste to the duke. [*Exit Henry.*] Poor youth, thou little knowest what thou hast undertaken. But if Martin has escaped, and if the duke arrives, they will not dare to proceed without proof.

Re-enter WICKERD *and followers.*

Wic. We have made a follower of Maltingen prisoner, Baron George, who reports that Martin has escaped.

Geo. Joy! joy! such joy as I can now feel! Set him free for the good news—and, Wickerd, keep a good watch in this spot all night. Send out scouts to find Martin, lest he should not be able to reach Ebersdorf.

Wic. I shall, noble sir.

[*The kettle-drums and trumpets flourish as for setting the watch: the scene closes.*

SCENE II.

The chapel at Ebersdorf, an ancient Gothic building.

ISABELLA *is discovered rising from before the altar, on which burn two tapers.*

Isa. I cannot pray. Terror and guilt have stifled devotion. The heart must be at ease—the hands must be pure when they are lifted to Heaven. Midnight is the hour of summons: it is now near. How can I pray, when I go resolved to deny a crime which every drop of my blood could not wash away! And my son! Oh! he will fall the victim

of my crime. Arnolf! Arnolf! thou art dreadfully avenged! [*Tap at the door.*] The footstep of my dreadful guide. [*Tap again.*] My courage is no more. [*Enter Gertrude by the door.*] Gertrude! is it only thou? [*embraces her.*]

Ger. Dear aunt, leave this awful place; it chills my very blood. My uncle sent me to call you to the hall.

Isa. Who is in the hall?

Ger. Only Reynold and the family, with whom my uncle is making merry.

Isa. Sawest thou no strange faces?

Ger. No; none but friends.

Isa. Art thou sure of that? Is George there?

Ger. No, nor Henry; both have ridden out. I think they might have stayed one day at least. But come, aunt, I hate this place; it reminds me of my dream. See, yonder was the spot where methought they were burying you alive, below yon monument [*pointing*].

Isa. [*starting.*] The monument of my first husband. Leave me, leave me, Gertrude. I follow in a moment. [*Exit Gertrude.*] Ay, there he lies! forgetful alike of his crimes and injuries! Insensible, as if this chapel had never rung with my shrieks, or the castle resounded to his parting groans! When shall I sleep so soundly? [*As she gazes on the monument, a figure muffled in black appears from behind it.*] Merciful God! is it a vision, such as has haunted my couch? [*It approaches: she goes on with mingled terror and resolution.*] Ghastly phantom, art thou the restless spirit of one who died in agony, or art thou the mysterious being that must guide me to the presence of the avengers of blood? [*Figure bends its head and beckons.*]—To-morrow! To-morrow! I cannot follow thee now! [*Figure shows a dagger from beneath its cloak.*] Compulsion! I understand thee: I will follow. [*She follows the figure a little way: he turns and wraps a black veil round her head, and takes her hand: then both exeunt behind the monument.*]

Scene III.

The Wood of Griefenhaus.—A watch fire, round which sit Wickerd, Conrad, and others, in their watch-cloaks.

Wic. The night is bitter cold.

Con. Ay, but thou hast lined thy doublet well with old Rhenish.

Wic. True; and I'll give you warrant for it. [*Sings.*]

(RHEIN-WEIN LIED)

What makes the troopers' frozen courage muster?
The grapes of juice divine.
Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they cluster:
Oh, blessed be the Rhine!

Let fringe and furs, and many a rabbit skin, sirs,
Bedeck your Saracen;
He'll freeze without what warms our hearts within, sirs,
When the night-frost crusts the fen.

But on the Rhine, but on the Rhine they cluster,
The grapes of juice divine,
That make our troopers' frozen courage muster:
Oh, blessed be the Rhine!

Con. Well sung, Wickerd; thou wert ever a jovial soul.

Enter a trooper or two more.

Wic. Hast thou made the rounds, Frank?

Frank. Yes, up to the hemlock marsh. It is a stormy night; the moon shone on the Wolfshill, and on the dead bodies with which to-day's work has covered it. We heard the spirit of the house of Maltingen wailing over the slaughter of its adherents: I durst go no farther.

Wic. Hen-hearted rascal! The spirit of some old raven, who was picking their bones.

Con. Nay, Wickerd; the churchmen say there are such things.

Frank. Ay; and Father Ludovic told us last sermon, how the devil twisted the neck of ten farmers at

Kletterbach, who refused to pay Peter's pence.

Wic. Yes, some church devil, no doubt.

Frank. Nay, old Reynold says, that in passing, by midnight, near the old chapel at our castle, he saw it all lighted up, and heard a chorus of voices sing the funeral service.

Another Soldier. Father Ludovic heard the same.

Wic. Hear me, ye hare-livered boys! Can you look death in the face in battle, and dread such nursery bugbears? Old Reynold saw his vision in the strength of the grape. As for the chaplain, far be it from me to name the spirit which visits him; but I know what I know, when I found him confessing Bertrand's pretty Agnes in the chestnut grove.

Con. But, Wickerd, though I have often heard of strange tales which I could not credit, yet there is one in our family so well attested, that I almost believe it. Shall I tell it you?

All Soldiers. Do! do tell it, gentle Conrad.

Wic. And I will take t' other sup of Rhenish to fence against the horrors of the tale.

Con. It is about my own uncle and godfather, Albert of Horsheim.

Wic. I have seen him—he was a gallant warrior.

Con. Well! He was long absent in the Bohemian wars. In an expedition he was benighted, and came to a lone house on the edge of a forest: he and his followers knocked repeatedly for entrance in vain. They forced the door, but found no inhabitants.

Frank. And they made good their quarters?

Con. They did: and Albert retired to rest in an upper chamber. Opposite to the bed on which he threw himself was a large mirror. At midnight he was awaked by deep groans: he cast his eyes upon the mirror, and saw——

Frank. Sacred Heaven! Heard you nothing?

Wic. Ay, the wind among the withered leaves. Go on, Conrad. Your uncle was a wise man.

Con. That's more than grey hairs can make other folks.

Wic. Ha! stripling, art thou so malapert? Though thou art Lord Henry's page, I shall teach thee who commands this party.

All Soldiers. Peace, peace, good Wickerd: let Conrad proceed.

Con. Where was I?

Frank. About the mirror.

Con. True. My uncle beheld in the mirror the reflection of a human face, distorted and covered with blood. A voice pronounced articulately, "It is yet time." As the words were spoken, my uncle discerned in the ghastly visage the features of his own father.

Soldier. Hush! By St. Francis I heard a groan. [*They start up all but Wickerd.*]

Wic. The croaking of a frog, who has caught cold in this bitter night, and sings rather more hoarsely than usual.

Frank. Wickerd, thou art surely no Christian. [*They sit down, and close round the fire.*]

Con. Well—my uncle called up his attendants, and they searched every nook of the chamber, but found nothing. So they covered the mirror with a cloth, and Albert was left alone: but hardly had he closed his eyes when the same voice proclaimed, "It is now too late;" the covering was drawn aside, and he saw the figure——

Frank. Merciful Virgin! It comes. [*All rise.*]

Wic. Where? what?

Con. See yon figure coming from the thicket!

Enter MARTIN, *in the monk's dress, much disordered: his face is very pale and his steps slow.*

Wic. [*levelling his pike.*] Man or devil, which thou wilt, thou shalt feel cold iron, if thou budgest a foot nearer. [*Martin stops.*] Who art thou? What dost thou seek?

Mar. To warm myself at your fire. It is deadly cold.

Wic. See there, ye cravens, your apparition is a poor benighted monk: sit down, father. [*They place Martin by the fire.*] By heaven, it is Martin—our Martin! Martin, how

fares it with thee? We have sought thee this whole night.

Mar. So have many others [*vacantly*].

Con. Yes, thy master.

Mar. Did you see him too?

Con. Whom? Baron George?

Mar. No! my first master, Arnolf of Ebersdorf.

Wic. He raves.

Mar. He passed me but now in the wood, mounted upon his old black steed; its nostrils breathed smoke and flame; neither tree nor rock stopped him. He said, "Martin, thou wilt return this night to my service!"

Wic. Wrap thy cloak around him, Francis; he is distracted with cold and pain. Dost thou not recollect me, old friend?

Mar. Yes, you are the butler at Ebersdorf: you have the charge of the large gilded cup, embossed with the figures of the twelve apostles. It was the favourite goblet of my old master.

Con. By our Lady, Martin, thou must be distracted indeed, to think our master would intrust Wickerd with the care of the cellar.

Mar. I know a face so like the apostate Judas on that cup. I have seen the likeness when I gazed on a mirror.

Wic. Try to go to sleep, dear Martin; it will relieve thy brain. [*Footsteps are heard in the wood.*] To your arms. [*They take their arms.*]

Enter two MEMBERS *of the Invisible Tribunal, muffled in their cloaks.*

Con. Stand! Who are you?

1 *Mem.* Travellers benighted in the wood.

Wic. Are ye friends to Aspen or Maltingen?

1 *Mem.* We enter not into their quarrel: we are friends to the right.

Wic. Then are ye friends to us, and welcome to pass the night by our fire.

2 *Mem.* Thanks. [*They approach the fire, and regard Martin very earnestly.*]

Con. Hear ye any news abroad?

2 *Mem.* None; but that oppression and villainy are rife and rank as ever.

Wic. The old complaint.

1 *Mem.* No! never did former age equal this in wickedness; and yet, as if the daily commission of enormities were not enough to blot the sun, every hour discovers crimes which have lain concealed for years.

Con. Pity the Holy Tribunal should slumber in its office.

2 *Mem.* Young man, it slumbers not. When criminals are ripe for its vengeance, it falls like the bolt of Heaven.

Mar. [*attempting to rise.*] Let me be gone.

Con. [*detaining him.*] Whither now, Martin?

Mar. To mass.

1 *Mem.* Even now, we heard a tale of a villain, who, ungrateful as the frozen adder, stung the bosom that had warmed him into life.

Mar. Conrad, bear me off; I would be away from these men.

Con. Be at ease, and strive to sleep.

Mar. Too well I know—I shall never sleep again.

2 *Mem.* The wretch of whom we speak became, from revenge and lust of gain, the murderer of the master whose bread he did eat.

Wic. Out upon the monster!

1 *Mem.* For nearly thirty years was he permitted to cumber the ground. The miscreant thought his crime was concealed; but the earth which groaned under his footsteps—the winds which passed over his unhallowed head—the stream which he polluted by his lips—the fire at which he warmed his blood-stained hands—every element bore witness to his guilt.

Mar. Conrad, good youth—lead me from hence, and I will show thee where, thirty years since, I deposited a mighty bribe. [*Rises.*

Con. Be patient, good Martin.

Wic. And where was the miscreant seized?

[*The two Members suddenly lay hands on Martin, and draw their daggers; the Soldiers spring to their arms.*

1 *Mem.* On this very spot.

Wic. Traitors, unloose your hold!

1 *Mem.* In the name of the In-

visible Judges, I charge ye, impede us not in our duty.

[*All sink their weapons, and stand motionless.*

Mar. Help! help!

1 *Mem.* Help him with your prayers!

[*He is dragged off. The scene shuts.*

ACT V.—Scene I.

The subterranean chapel of the Castle of Griefenhaus. It seems deserted, and in decay. There are four entrances, each defended by an iron portal. At each door stands a warder clothed in black, and masked, armed with a naked sword. During the whole scene they remain motionless on their posts. In the centre of the chapel is the ruinous altar, half sunk in the ground, on which lie a large book, a dagger, and a coil of ropes, beside two lighted tapers. Antique stone benches of different heights around the chapel. In the back scene is seen a dilapidated entrance into the sacristy, which is quite dark.

Various Members of the Invisible Tribunal enter by the four different doors of the chapel. Each whispers something as he passes the Warder, which is answered by an inclination of the head. The costume of the Members is a long black robe, capable of muffling the face: some wear it in this manner; others have their faces uncovered, unless on the entrance of a stranger: they place themselves in profound silence upon the stone benches.

Enter Count Roderic, *dressed in a scarlet cloak of the same form with those of the other Members. He takes his place on the most elevated bench.*

Rod. Warders, secure the doors! [*The doors are barred with great care.*] Herald, do thy duty!

[*Members all rise—Herald stands by the altar.*

Her. Members of the Invisible Tribunal, who judge in secret, and avenge in secret, like the Deity, are your hearts free from malice, and your hands from blood-guiltiness?

[*All the Members incline their heads.*

Rod. God pardon our sins of ignorance, and preserve us from those of presumption.

[*Again the Members solemnly incline their heads.*

Her. To the east, and to the west, and to the north, and to the south, I raise my voice; wherever there is treason, wherever there is blood-guiltiness, wherever there is sacrilege, sorcery, robbery, or perjury, there let this curse alight, and pierce the marrow and the bone. Raise, then, your voices, and say with me, woe! woe, unto offenders!

All. Woe! woe!

[*Members sit down.*

Her. He who knoweth of an unpunished crime, let him stand forth as bound by his oath when his hand was laid upon the dagger and upon the cord, and call to the assembly for vengeance!

Mem. [*rises, his face covered.*] Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

Rod. Upon whom dost thou invoke vengeance?

Accuser. Upon a brother of this order, who is forsworn and perjured to its laws.

Rod. Relate his crime.

Accu. This perjured brother was sworn, upon the steel and upon the cord, to denounce malefactors to the judgment-seat, from the four quarters of heaven, though it were the spouse of his heart, or the son whom he loved as the apple of his eye; yet did he conceal the guilt of one who was dear unto him; he folded up the crime from the knowledge of the tribunal; he removed the evidence of guilt, and withdrew the criminal from justice. What does his perjury deserve?

Rod. Accuser, come before the altar; lay thy hand upon the dagger and the cord, and swear to the truth of thy accusation.

Accu. [*his hand on the altar.*] I swear!

Rod. Wilt thou take upon thyself the penalty of perjury, should it be found false?

Accu. I will.

Rod. Brethren, what is your sentence?

[*The Members confer a moment in whispers—a silence.*

Eldest Mem. Our voice is, that the perjured brother merits death.

Rod. Accuser, thou hast heard the voice of the assembly; name the criminal.

Accu. George, Baron of Aspen.

[*A murmur in the assembly.*

A Mem. [*suddenly rising.*] I am ready, according to our holy laws, to swear, by the steel and the cord, that George of Aspen merits not this accusation, and that it is a foul calumny.

Accu. Rash man! gagest thou an oath so lightly?

Mem. I gage it not lightly. I proffer it in the cause of innocence and virtue.

Accu. What if George of Aspen should not himself deny the charge?

Mem. Then would I never trust man again.

Accu. Hear him, then, bear witness against himself [*throws back his mantle*].

Rod. Baron George of Aspen!

Geo. The same—prepared to do penance for the crime of which he stands self-accused.

Rod. Still, canst thou disclose the name of the criminal whom thou hast rescued from justice, on that condition alone thy brethren may save thy life.

Geo. Thinkest thou I would betray for the safety of my life, a secret I have preserved at the breach of my word?—No! I have weighed the value of my obligation—I will not discharge it—but most willingly will I pay the penalty!

Rod. Retire, George of Aspen, till the assembly pronounce judgment.

Geo. Welcome be your sentence—I am weary of your yoke of iron. A light beams on my soul. Woe to those who seek justice in the dark haunts of mystery and of cruelty! She dwells in the broad blaze of the sun, and Mercy is ever by her side. Woe to those who would advance the general weal by trampling upon the social affections! they aspire to be more than men—they shall become worse than tigers. I go: better for me your altars should be stained with my blood, than my soul blackened with your crimes.

[*Exit George, by the ruinous door in the back scene, into the sacristy.*

Rod. Brethren, sworn upon the steel and upon the cord, to judge and to avenge in secret, without favour and without pity, what is your judgment upon George of Aspen, self-accused of perjury, and resistance to the laws of our fraternity.

[*Long and earnest murmurs in the assembly.*

Rod. Speak your doom.

Eldest Mem. George of Aspen has declared himself perjured;—the penalty of perjury is death!

Rod. Father of the secret judges—Eldest among those who avenge in secret—take to thee the steel and the cord;—let the guilty no longer cumber the land.

Eldest Mem. I am fourscore and eight years old. My eyes are dim, and my hand is feeble; soon shall I be called before the throne of my Creator;—How shall I stand there, stained with the blood of such a man?

Rod. How wilt thou stand before that throne, loaded with the guilt of a broken oath? The blood of the criminal be upon us and ours!

Eldest Mem. So be it, in the name of God!

[*He takes the dagger from the altar, goes slowly towards the back scene, and reluctantly enters the sacristy.*

Eldest Judge [*from behind the scene.*] Dost thou forgive me?

Geo. [*behind.*] I do! [*He is heard to fall heavily.*]

[*Re-enter the old judge from the sacristy. He lays on the altar the bloody dagger.*

Rod. Hast thou done thy duty?

Eldest Mem. I have. [*He faints.*

Rod. He swoons. Remove him.

[*He is assisted off the stage. During this four members enter the sacristy, and bring out a bier covered with a pall, which they place on the steps of the altar. A deep silence.*

Rod. Judges of evil, dooming in secret, and avenging in secret, like the Deity: God keep your thoughts

from evil, and your hands from guilt.

Ber. I raise my voice in this assembly, and cry, Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

Rod. Enough has this night been done—[*he rises and brings Bertram forward.*] Think what thou doest—George has fallen—it were murder to slay both mother and son.

Ber. George of Aspen was thy victim—a sacrifice to thy hatred and envy. I claim mine, sacred to justice and to my murdered brother. Resume thy place!—thou canst not stop the rock thou hast put in motion.

Rod. [*resumes his seat.*] Upon whom callest thou for vengeance?

Ber. Upon Isabella of Aspen.

Rod. She has been summoned.

Herald. Isabella of Aspen, accused of murder by poison, I charge thee to appear, and stand upon thy defence.

[*Three knocks are heard at one of the doors—it is opened by the warder.*

Enter ISABELLA, *the veil still wrapped around her head, led by her conductor. All the members muffle their faces.*

Rod. Uncover her eyes.

[*The veil is removed. Isabella looks wildly round.*

Rod. Knowest thou, lady, where thou art?

Isa. I guess.

Rod. Say thy guess.

Isa. Before the Avengers of blood.

Rod. Knowest thou why thou art called to their presence?

Isa. No.

Rod. Speak, accuser.

Ber. I impeach thee, Isabella of Aspen, before this awful assembly, of having murdered, privily and by poison, Arnolf of Ebersdorf, thy first husband.

Rod. Canst thou swear to the accusation?

Ber. [*his hand on the altar.*] I lay my hand on the steel and the cord, and swear.

Rod. Isabella of Aspen, thou hast heard thy accusation. What canst thou answer?

Isa. That the oath of an accuser is no proof of guilt!

Rod. Hast thou more to say?

Isa. I have.

Rod. Speak on.

Isa. Judges invisible to the sun, and seen only by the stars of midnight! I stand before you, accused of an enormous, daring, and premeditated crime. I was married to Arnolf when I was only eighteen years old. Arnolf was wary and jealous; ever suspecting me without a cause, unless it was because he had injured me. How then should I plan and perpetrate such a deed? The lamb turns not against the wolf, though a prisoner in his den.

Rod. Have you finished?

Isa. A moment. Years after years have elapsed without a whisper of this foul suspicion. Arnolf left a brother! though common fame had been silent, natural affection would have been heard against me—why spoke he not my accusation? Or has my conduct justified this horrible charge? No! awful judges, I may answer, I have founded cloisters, I have endowed hospitals. The goods that Heaven bestowed on me I have not held back from the needy. I appeal to you, judges of evil, can these proofs of innocence be downweighed by the assertion of un unknown and disguised, perchance a malignant accuser?

Ber. No longer will I wear that disguise [*throws back his mantle*]. Dost thou know me now?

Isa. Yes; I know thee for a wandering minstrel, relieved by the charity of my husband.

Ber. No, traitress! know me for Bertram of Ebersdorf, brother to him thou didst murder. Call her accomplice, Martin. Ha! turnest thou pale?

Isa. May I have some water?—[*Apart.*] Sacred Heaven! his vindictive look is so like—

[*Water is brought.*

A Mem. Martin died in the hands of our brethren.

Rod. Dost thou know the accuser, lady?

Isa. [*reassuming fortitude.*] Let

not the sinking of nature under this dreadful trial be imputed to the consciousness of guilt. I do know the accuser—know him to be outlawed for homicide, and under the ban of the empire: his testimony cannot be received.

Eldest Judge. She says truly.

Ber. [*to Roderic.*] Then I call upon thee and William of Wolfstein to bear witness to what you know.

Rod. Wolfstein is not in the assembly, and my place prevents me from being a witness.

Ber. Then I will call another: meanwhile let the accused be removed.

Rod. Retire, lady. [*Isabella is led to the sacristy.*

Isa. [*in going off.*] The ground is slippery—Heavens! it is floated with blood! [*Exit into the sacristy.*

Rod. [*apart to Bertram.*] Whom dost thou mean to call?

[*Bertram whispers.*

Rod. This goes beyond me. [*After a moment's thought.*] But be it so. Maltingen shall behold Aspen humbled in the dust. [*Aloud.*] Brethren, the accuser calls for a witness who remains without: admit him.

[*All muffle their faces.*

Enter RUDIGER, *his eyes bound or covered, leaning upon two members; they place a stool for him, and unbind his eyes.*

Rod. Knowest thou where thou art, and before whom?

Rud. I know not, and I care not. Two strangers summoned me from my castle to assist, they said, at a great act of justice. I ascended the litter they brought, and I am here.

Rod. It regards the punishment of perjury and the discovery of murder. Art thou willing to assist us?

Rud. Most willing, as is my duty.

Rod. What if the crime regard thy friend?

Rud. I will hold him no longer so.

Rod. What if thine own blood?

Rud. I would let it out with my poniard.

Rod. Then canst thou not blame us for this deed of justice. Remove the pall. [*The pall is lifted, beneath which is discovered the body of George pale and bloody. Rudiger staggers towards it.*]

Rud. My George! my George! Not slain manly in battle, but murdered by legal assassins. Much, much may I mourn thee, my beloved boy; but not now—not now: never will I shed a tear for thy death till I have cleared thy fame.—Hear me, ye midnight murderers, he was innocent [*raising his voice*]—upright as the truth itself. Let the man who dares gainsay me lift that gage. If the Almighty does not strengthen these frail limbs, to make good a father's quarrel, I have a son left, who will vindicate the honour of Aspen, or lay his bloody body beside his brother's.

Rod. Rash and insensate! Hear first the cause. Hear the dishonour of thy house.

Isa. [*from the sacristy.*] Never shall he hear it till the author is no more! [*Rudiger attempts to rush towards the sacristy, but is prevented. Isabella enters wounded, and throws herself on George's body.*]

Isa. Murdered for me—for me! my dear, dear son!

Rud. [*still held.*] Cowardly villains, let me loose! Maltingen, this is thy doing! Thy face thou wouldst disguise, thy deeds thou canst not! I defy thee to instant and mortal combat!

Isa. [*looking up.*] No! no! endanger not thy life! Myself! myself! I could not bear thou shouldst know——Oh! [*Dies.*]

Rud. Oh! let me go—let me but try to stop her blood, and I will forgive all.

Rod. Drag him off and detain him. The voice of lamentation must not disturb the stern deliberation of justice.

Rud. Bloodhound of Maltingen! Well beseems thee thy base revenge! The marks of my son's lance are still on thy craven crest! Vengeance on the band of ye!

[*Rudiger is dragged off to the sacristy.*

Rod. Brethren, we stand discovered! What is to be done to him who shall descry our mystery?

Eldest Judge. He must become a brother of our order, or die!

Rod. This man will never join us! He cannot put his hand into ours, which are stained with the blood of his wife and son: he must therefore die! [*Murmurs in the assembly.*] Brethren! I wonder not at your reluctance; but the man is powerful, has friends and allies to buckler his cause. It is over with us, and with our order, unless the laws are obeyed. [*Fainter murmurs.*] Besides, have we not sworn a deadly oath to execute these statutes? [*A dead silence.*] Take to thee the steel and the cord [*to the eldest judge*].

Eldest Judge. He has done no evil—he was the companion of my battle—I will not!

Rod. [*to another.*] Do thou—and succeed to the rank of him who has disobeyed. Remember your oath! [*Member takes the dagger, and goes irresolutely forward; looks into the sacristy, and comes back.*]

Mem. He has fainted—fainted in anguish for his wife and his son; the bloody ground is strewed with his white hairs, torn by those hands that have fought for Christendom. I will not be your butcher.—[*Throws down the dagger.*]

Ber. Irresolute and perjured! the robber of my inheritance, the author of my exile, shall die!

Rod. Thanks, Bertram. Execute the doom—secure the safety of the holy tribunal!

[*Bertram seizes the dagger, and is about to rush into the sacristy, when three loud knocks are heard at the door.*

All. Hold! Hold!

[*The Duke of Bavaria, attended by many members of the Invisible Tribunal, enters, dressed in a scarlet mantle trimmed with ermine, and wearing a ducal crown.—He carries a rod in his hand.—All rise.—A murmur among the members, who whisper to each other, "The Duke," "The Chief," etc.*

Rod. The Duke of Bavaria! I am lost.

Duke. [*sees the bodies.*] I am too late—the victims have fallen.

Hen. [*who enters with the Duke.*] Gracious Heaven! O George!

Rud. [*from the sacristy.*] Henry—it is thy voice—save me!

[*Henry rushes into the sacristy.*

Duke. Roderic of Maltingen, descend from the seat which thou hast dishonoured—[*Roderic leaves his place, which the Duke occupies.*]—Thou standest accused of having perverted the laws of our order; for that, being a mortal enemy to the House of Aspen, thou hast abused thy sacred authority to pander to thy private revenge; and to this Wolfstein has been witness.

Rod. Chief among our circles, I have but acted according to our laws.

Duke. Thou hast indeed observed the letter of our statutes, and woe am I that they do warrant this night's bloody work! I cannot do unto thee as I would, but what I can I will. Thou hast not indeed transgressed our law, but thou hast wrested and abused it: kneel down, therefore, and place thy hands betwixt mine. [*Roderic kneels as directed.*] I degrade thee from thy sacred office [*spreads his hands, as pushing Roderic from him*]. If after two days thou darest to pollute Bavarian ground by thy footsteps, be it at the peril of the steel and the cord [*Roderic rises*]. I dissolve this meeting [*all rise*]. Judges and condemners of others, God teach you knowledge of yourselves! [*All bend their heads—Duke breaks his rod, and comes forward.*]

Rod. Lord Duke, thou hast charged me with treachery—thou art my liege lord—but who else dares maintain the accusation, lies in his throat.

Hen. [*rushing from the sacristy.*] Villain! I accept thy challenge!

Rod. Vain boy! my lance shall chastise thee in the lists—there lies my gage.

Duke. Henry, on thy allegiance, touch it not. [*To Roderic.*] Lists shalt thou never more enter; lance shalt thou never more wield [*draws his sword*]. With this sword wast thou dubbed a knight; with this

sword I dishonour thee—I thy prince—[*strikes him slightly with the flat of the sword*]—I take from thee the degree of knight, the dignity of chivalry. Thou art no longer a free German noble; thou art honourless and rightless; the funeral obsequies shall be performed for thee as for one dead to knightly honour and to fair fame; thy spurs shall be hacked from thy heels; thy arms baffled and reversed by the common executioner. Go, fraudful and dishonoured, hide thy shame in a foreign land! [*Roderic shows a dumb expression of rage.*] Lay hands on Bertram of Ebersdorf; as I live, he shall pay the forfeiture of his outlawry. Henry, aid us to remove thy father from this charnel-house. Never shall he know the dreadful secret. Be it mine to soothe his sorrows, and to restore the honour of the House of Aspen.

[*Curtain slowly falls.*]

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL[1]

The Poem, now offered to the Public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants living in a state partly pastoral and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the Author than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the Ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude, in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which, in some degree, authorises the change of rhythm in the text. The machinery, also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a Poem which did not partake of the rudeness of the old Ballad, or Metrical Romance.

For these reasons, the Poem was put into the mouth of an ancient Minstrel, the last of the race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry, without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the Tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the personages actually flourished. The time occupied by the action is Three Nights and Three Days.

INTRODUCTION

The way was long, the wind was cold,
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses gray,
Seem'd to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the Bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, welladay! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppress'd,
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.
No more on prancing palfrey borne,
He caroll'd, light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caress'd,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd, to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:

[1] Dedication: To the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Dalkieth, this poem is inscribed by the Author.

Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger fill'd the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorn'd and poor,
He begg'd his bread from door to door.
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp, a king had loved to hear.

He pass'd where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower;
The Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
No humbler resting-place was nigh,
With hesitating step at last,
The embattled portal arch he pass'd,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and poor.
The Duchess marked his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell,
That they should tend the old man well:
For she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree;
In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb!

When kindness had his wants supplied,
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his minstrel pride:
And he began to talk anon,
Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
And of Earl Walter, rest him, God!
A braver ne'er to battle rode;
And how full many a tale he knew,
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch:
And, would the noble Duchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain,
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
That, if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtain'd;
The Aged Minstrel audience gain'd.
But, when he reach'd the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
Perchance he wish'd his boon denied:

For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease,
Which marks security to please;
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain!
The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain
He could recall an ancient strain,
He never thought to sing again.
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls;
He had play'd it to King Charles the Good,
When he kept court in Holyrood;
And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try
The long-forgotten melody.
Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
And an uncertain warbling made,
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face, and smiled;
And lighten'd up his faded eye,
With all a poet's ecstasy!
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along:
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot:
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost;
Each blank, in faithless memory void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

CANTO FIRST

1. The feast was over in Branksome tower,
And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower;
Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
Jesu Maria, shield us well!
No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

II. The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
Knight, and page, and household squire,
Loiter'd through the lofty hall,
Or crowded round the ample fire:
The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,
And urged, in dreams, the forest race,
From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.

III. Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome-Hall;
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
Brought them their steeds to bower from stall;
Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
Waited, duteous, on them all:
They were all knights of mettle true,
Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

IV. Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel:
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest,
With corslet laced,
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard;
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd.

V. Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten;
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
And with Jedwood-axe at saddlebow;
A hundred more fed free in stall:—
Such was the custom of Branksome-Hall.

VI. Why do these steeds stand ready dight?
Why watch these warriors, arm'd, by night?—
They watch, to hear the blood-hound baying:
They watch to hear the war-horn braying;
To see St. George's red cross streaming,
To see the midnight beacon gleaming:
They watch, against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.

VII. Such is the custom of Branksome-Hall.—
Many a valiant knight is here;
But he, the chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the wall,
Beside his broken spear.
Bards long shall tell
How Lord Walter fell!
When startled burghers fled, afar,
The furies of the Border war;
When the streets of high Dunedin
Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
And heard the slogan's deadly yell—
Then the Chief of Branksome fell.

VIII. Can piety the discord heal,
Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?
Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,
Can love of blessed charity?
No! vainly to each holy shrine,
In mutual pilgrimage, they drew;
Implored, in vain, the grace divine
For chiefs, their own red falchions slew:
While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot!

IX. In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier
The warlike foresters had bent;
And many a flower, and many a tear,
Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent:
But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The Ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear!
Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the slain,
Had lock'd the source of softer woe;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow;
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee—
"And if I live to be a man,
My father's death revenged shall be!"
Then fast the mother's tears did seek
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

X. All loose her negligent attire,
All loose her golden hair,
Hung Margaret o'er her slaughter'd sire,
And wept in wild despair,

But not alone the bitter tear
Had filial grief supplied;
For hopeless love, and anxious fear,
Had lent their mingled tide:
Nor in her mother's alter'd eye
Dared she to look for sympathy.
Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,
With Carr in arms had stood,
When Mathouse-burn to Melrose ran,
All purple with their blood;
And well she knew, her mother dread,
Before Lord Cranstoun she should wed,
Would see her on her dying bed.

XI. Of noble race the Ladye came,
Her father was a clerk of fame,
Of Bethune's line of Picardie:
He learn'd the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea.
Men said, he changed his mortal frame
By feat of magic mystery;
For when, in studious mood, he paced
St. Andrew's cloister'd hall,
His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall!

XII. And of his skill, as bards avow,
He taught that Ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
The viewless forms of air.
And now she sits in secret bower,
In old Lord David's western tower,
And listens to a heavy sound,
That moans the mossy turrets round.
Is it the roar of Teviot's tide,
That chafes against the scaur's red side?
Is it the wind that swings the oaks?
Is it the echo from the rocks?
What may it be, the heavy sound,
That moans old Branksome's turrets round?

XIII. At the sullen, moaning sound,
The ban-dogs bay and howl;
And, from the turrets round,
Loud whoops the startled owl.
In the hall, both squire and knight
Swore that a storm was near,
And looked forth to view the night,
But the night was still and clear!

XIV. From the sound of Teviot's tide,
Chafing with the mountain's side,
From the groan of the wind-swung oak,
From the sullen echo of the rock,
From the voice of the coming storm,
The Ladye knew it well!
It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke,
And he called on the Spirit of the Fell.

RIVER SPIRIT

XV. "Sleep'st thou, brother?"—

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

—"Brother, nay—
On my hills the moon-beams play.
From Craik-cross to Skelfhill-pen,
By every rill, in every glen,
Merry elves their morris pacing,
To aërial minstrelsy,
Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
Trip it deft and merrily.
Up, and mark their nimble feet!
Up, and list their music sweet!"—

RIVER SPIRIT

XVI. "Tears of an imprison'd maiden
Mix with my polluted stream;
Margaret of Branksome, sorrow-laden,
Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam.
Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,
When shall cease these feudal jars?
What shall be the maiden's fate?
Who shall be the maiden's mate?"—

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

XVII. "Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,
In utter darkness round the pole;
The Northern Bear lowers black and grim;
Orion's studded belt is dim;
Twinkling faint, and distant far,
Shimmers through mist each planet star;
Ill may I read their high decree!
But no kind influence deign they shower
On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,
Till pride be quell'd, and love be free."

xviii. The unearthly voices ceast,
And the heavy sound was still;
It died on the river's breast,
It died on the side of the hill.
But round Lord David's tower
The sound still floated near;
For it rung in the Ladye's bower,
And it rung in the Ladye's ear.
She raised her stately head,
And her heart throbb'd high with pride:—
"Your mountains shall bend,
And your streams ascend,
Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!"

xix. The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
Where many a bold retainer lay,
And, with jocund din, among them all,
Her son pursued his infant play.
A fancied moss-trooper, the boy
The truncheon of a spear bestrode,
And round the hall, right merrily,
In mimic foray rode.
Even bearded knights, in arms grown old,
Share in his frolic gambols bore,
Albeit their hearts of rugged mould,
Were stubborn as the steel they wore.
For the grey warriors prophesied,
How the brave boy, in future war,
Should tame the Unicorn's pride,
Exalt the Crescent and the Star.

xx. The Ladye forgot her purpose high,
One moment, and no more;
One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
As she paused at the arched door:
Then from amid the armed train,
She call'd to her William of Deloraine.

xxi. A stark moss-trooping Scott was he,
As e'er couch'd Border lance by knee;
Through Solway sands, through Tarras moss,
Blindfold, he knew the paths to cross;
By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds;
In Eske or Liddel, fords were none,
But he would ride them, one by one;
Alike to him was time or tide,
December's snow, or July's pride;
Alike to him was tide or time,
Moonless midnight, or matin prime:

Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
As ever drove prey from Cumberland;
Five times outlawed had he been,
By England's King, and Scotland's Queen.

XXII. "Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,
Mount thee on the wightest steed;
Spare not to spur, not stint to ride,
Until thou come to fair Tweedside;
And in Melrose's holy pile
Seek thou the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.
Greet the Father well from me;
Say that the fated hour is come,
And to-night he shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb:
For this will be St. Michael's night,
And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright;
And the Cross, of bloody red,
Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.

XXIII. "What he gives thee, see thou keep;
Stay not thou for food or sleep:
Be it scroll, or be it book,
Into it, Knight, thou must not look;
If thou readest, thou art lorn!
Better had'st thou ne'er been born."—

XXIV. "O swiftly can speed my dapple-grey steed,
Which drinks of the Teviot clear;
Ere break of day," the Warrior 'gan say,
"Again will I be here:
And safer by none may thy errand be done,
Than, noble dame, by me;
Letter nor line know I never a one,
Wer't my neck-verse at Hairibee."

XXV. Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
And soon the steep descent he past,
Soon cross'd the sounding barbican,
And soon the Teviot side he won.
Eastward the wooded path he rode,
Green hazels o'er his basnet nod;
He passed the Peel of Goldiland,
And cross'd old Borthwick's roaring strand;
Dimly he view'd the Moat-hill's mound,
Where Druid shades still flitted round;
In Hawick twinkled many a light;
Behind him soon they set in night;
And soon he spurr'd his courser keen
Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.

XXVI. The clattering hoofs the watchmen mark;—
"Stand, ho! thou courier of the dark."—
"For Branksome, ho!" the knight rejoin'd,
And left the friendly tower behind.
He turn'd him now from Teviotside,
And, guided by the tinkling rill,
Northward the dark ascent did ride,
And gained the moor at Horsliehill;
Broad on the left before him lay,
For many a mile, the Roman way.

XXVII. A moment now he slack'd his speed,
A moment breathed his panting steed;
Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band,
And loosen'd in the sheath his brand.
On Minto-crags the moonbeams glint,
Where Barnhill hew'd his bed of flint;
Who flung his outlaw'd limbs to rest,
Where falcons hang their giddy nest,
Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye
For many a league his prey could spy;
Cliffs, doubling, on their echoes borne,
The terrors of the robber's horn;
Cliffs, which, for many a later year,
The warbling Doric reed shall hear,
When some sad swain shall teach the grove,
Ambition is no cure for love!

XXVIII. Unchalleng'd, thence pass'd Deloraine,
To ancient Riddel's fair domain,
Where Aill, from mountains freed,
Down from the lakes did raving come;
Each wave was crested with tawny foam,
Like the mane of a chestnut steed.
In vain! no torrent, deep or broad,
Might bar the bold moss-trooper's road.

XXIX. At the first plunge the horse sunk low,
And the water broke o'er the saddlebow;
Above the foaming tide, I ween,
Scarce half the charger's neck was seen;
For he was barded from counter to tail,
And the rider was armed complete in mail;
Never heavier man and horse
Stemm'd a midnight torrent's force.
The warrior's very plume, I say,
Was daggled by the dashing spray;
Yet, through good heart, and Our Ladye's grace,
At length he gain'd the landing-place.

xxx. Now Bowden Moor the march-man won,
And sternly shook his plumed head,
As glanced his eye o'er Halidon;
For on his soul the slaughter red
Of that unhallow'd morn arose,
When first the Scott and Carr were foes;
When royal James beheld the fray,
Prize to the victor of the day;
When Home and Douglas, in the van,
Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,
Till gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear
Reek'd on dark Elliot's Border spear.

xxxi. In bitter mood he spurred fast,
And soon the hated heath was past;
And far beneath, in lustre wan,
Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran:
Like some tall rock with lichens grey,
Seem'd dimly huge, the dark Abbaye.
When Hawick he pass'd, had curfew rung,
Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung.
The sound, upon the fitful gale,
In solemn wise did rise and fail,
Like that wild harp, whose magic tone
Is waken'd by the winds alone.
But when Melrose he reach'd, 'twas silence all;
He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
And sought the convent's lonely wall.

Here paused the harp; and with its swell
The Master's fire and courage fell;
Dejectedly, and low, he bow'd,
And, gazing timid on the crowd,
He seem'd to seek, in every eye,
If they approved his minstrelsy;
And, diffident of present praise,
Somewhat he spoke of former days,
And how old age, and wand'ring long,
Had done his hand and harp some wrong.
The Duchess, and her daughters fair,
And every gentle lady there,
Each after each, in due degree,
Gave praises to his melody;
His hand was true, his voice was clear,
And much they long'd the rest to hear.
Encouraged thus, the Aged Man,
After meet rest, again began.

CANTO SECOND

I. If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins grey.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruin'd central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruin'd pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

II. Short halt did Deloraine make there;
Little reck'd he of the scene so fair:
With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,
He struck full loud, and struck full long.
The porter hurried to the gate—
"Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late?"
"From Branksome I," the warrior cried;
And straight the wicket open'd wide:
For Branksome's Chiefs had in battle stood,
To fence the rights of fair Melrose;
And lands and livings, many a rood,
Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose.

III. Bold Deloraine his errand said;
The porter bent his humble head;
With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
And noiseless step, the path he trod;
The arched cloister, far and wide,
Rang to the warrior's clanking stride,
Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
He enter'd the cell of the ancient priest,
And lifted his barred aventayle,[1]
To hail the Monk of St. Mary's aisle.

IV. "The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me;
Says, that the fated hour is come,

[1] *Aventayle*, visor of the helmet.

And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb."
From sackcloth couch the Monk arose,
With toil his stiffen'd limbs he rear'd;
A hundred years had flung their snows
On his thin locks and floating beard.

v. And strangely on the Knight look'd he,
And his blue eyes gleam'd wild and wide;
"And, darest thou, Warrior! seek to see
What heaven and hell alike would hide?
My breast, in belt of iron pent,
With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn;
For threescore years, in penance spent,
My knees those flinty stones have worn:
Yet all too little to atone
For knowing what should ne'er be known.
Would'st thou thy every future year
In ceaseless prayer and penance drie,
Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
Then, daring Warrior, follow me!"—

vi. "Penance, father, will I none;
Prayer know I hardly one;
For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
Save to patter an Ave Mary,
When I ride on a Border foray.
Other prayer can I none;
So speed me my errand, and let me be gone."—

vii. Again on the Knight look'd the Churchman old,
And again he sighed heavily;
For he had himself been a warrior bold,
And fought in Spain and Italy.
And he thought on the days that were long since by
When his limbs were strong, and his courage was high:—
Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay;
The pillar'd arches were over their head,
And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.

viii. Spreading herbs, and flowerets bright,
Glisten'd with the dew of night;
Nor herb, nor floweret, glisten'd there,
But was carved in the cloister-arches as fair.
The Monk gazed long on the lovely moon,
Then into the night he looked forth;
And red and bright the streamers light
Were dancing in the glowing north.

So had he seen, in fair Castile,
The youth in glittering squadrons start;
Sudden the flying jennet wheel,
And hurl the unexpected dart.
He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
That spirits were riding the northern light.

IX. By a steel-clenched postern door,
They enter'd now the chancel tall;
The darken'd roof rose high aloof
On pillars lofty and light and small:
The key-stone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,
Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille;
The corbells were carved grotesque and grim;
And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,
With base and with capital flourish'd around,
Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

X. Full many a scutcheon and banner riven,
Shook to the cold night-wind of heaven,
Around the screened altar's pale;
And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant Chief of Otterburne!
And thine, dark Knight of Liddesdale!
O fading honours of the dead!
O high ambition, lowly laid!

XI. The moon on the east oriel shone
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliaged tracery combined;
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
'Twixt poplars straight the ozier wand,
In many a freakish knot, had twined;
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
And changed the willow-wreaths to stone.
The silver light, so pale and faint,
Show'd many a prophet, and many a saint,
Whose image on the glass was dyed;
Full in the midst, his Cross of Red
Triumphant Michael brandished,
And trampled the Apostate's pride.
The moon-beam kiss'd the holy pane,
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

XII. They sate them down on a marble stone,—
(A Scottish monarch slept below;)
Thus spoke the Monk, in solemn tone:—
"I was not always a man of woe;

For Paynim countries I have trod,
And fought beneath the Cross of God:
Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,
And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

XIII. "In these far climes it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott:
A wizard, of such dreaded fame,
That when, in Salamanca's cave,
Him listed his magic wand to wave,
The bells would ring in Notre Dame!
Some of his skill he taught to me;
And, Warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone:
But to speak them were a deadly sin;
And for having but thought them my heart within,
A treble penance must be done.

XIV. "When Michael lay on his dying bed,
His conscience was awakened:
He bethought him of his sinful deed,
And he gave me a sign to come with speed:
I was in Spain when the morning rose,
But I stood by his bed ere evening close.
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid;
They would rend this Abbaye's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV. "I swore to bury his Mighty Book,
That never mortal might therein look;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at his Chief of Branksome's need:
And when that need was past and o'er,
Again the volume to restore.
I buried him on St. Michael's night,
When the bell toll'd one, and the moon was bright,
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stained red,
That his patron's cross might over him wave,
And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave.

XVI. "It was a night of woe and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid!
Strange sounds along the chancel pass'd,
The banners waved without a blast"—
—Still spoke the Monk, when the bell toll'd one!—
I tell you, that a braver man

Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurr'd a steed;
Yet somewhat was he chill'd with dread,
And his hair did bristle upon his head.

XVII. "Lo, Warrior! now, the Cross of Red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead;
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the night:
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
Until the eternal doom shall be."—
Slow moved the Monk to the broad flag-stone,
Which the bloody Cross was traced upon:
He pointed to a secret nook;
An iron bar the Warrior took;
And the Monk made a sign with his wither'd hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII. With beating heart to the task he went;
His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent;
With bar of iron heaved amain,
Till the toil-drops fell from his brows, like rain.
It was by dint of passing strength,
That he moved the massy stone at length.
I would you had been there, to see
How the light broke forth so gloriously,
Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,
And through the galleries far aloof!
No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright:
It shone like heaven's own blessed light,
And, issuing from the tomb,
Show'd the Monk's cowl, and visage pale,
Danced on the dark-brow'd Warrior's mail,
And kiss'd his waving plume.

XIX. Before their eyes the Wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver roll'd,
He seem'd some seventy winters old;
A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea:
His left hand held his Book of Might;
A silver cross was in his right;
The lamp was placed beside his knee:
High and majestic was his look,
At which the fellest fiends had shook,
And all unruffled was his face:
They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

XX. Often had William of Deloraine
Rode through the battle's bloody plain,
And trampled down the warriors slain,
And neither known remorse nor awe;
Yet now remorse and awe he own'd;
His breath came thick, his head swam round,
When this strange scene of death he saw.
Bewilder'd and unnerved he stood,
And the priest pray'd fervently and loud:
With eyes averted prayed he;
He might not endure the sight to see,
Of the man he had loved so brotherly.

XXI. And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,
Thus unto Deloraine he said:—
"Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
Or, Warrior, we may dearly rue;
For those, thou may'st not look upon,
Are gathering fast round the yawning stone!"—
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
With iron clasp'd, and with iron bound:
He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd;
But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the warrior's sight.

XXII. When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
The night return'd in double gloom;
For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few;
And, as the Knight and Priest withdrew,
With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
They hardly might the postern gain.
'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,
They heard strange noises on the blast;
And through the cloister-galleries small,
Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall,
Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,
And voices unlike the voice of man;
As if the fiends kept holiday,
Because these spells were brought to day.
I cannot tell how the truth may be;
I say the tale as 'twas said to me.

XXIII. "Now, hie thee hence," the Father said,
"And when we are on death-bed laid,
O may our dear Ladye, and sweet St. John,
Forgive our souls for the deed we have done!"—

The Monk return'd him to his cell,
And many a prayer and penance sped;
When the convent met at the noontide bell—
The Monk of St. Mary's aisle was dead!
Before the cross was the body laid,
With hands clasp'd fast, as if still he pray'd.

XXIV. The Knight breathed free in the morning wind,
And strove his hardihood to find:
He was glad when he pass'd the tombstones grey,
Which girdle round the fair Abbaye;
For the mystic Book, to his bosom prest,
Felt like a load upon his breast;
And his joints, with nerves of iron twined,
Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind.
Full fain was he when the dawn of day
Began to brighten Cheviot grey;
He joy'd to see the cheerful light,
And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might.

XXV. The sun had brighten'd Cheviot grey,
The sun had brighten'd the Carter's side;
And soon beneath the rising day
Smiled Branksome Towers and Teviot's tide.
The wild birds told their warbling tale,
And waken'd every flower that blows;
And peeped forth the violet pale,
And spread her breast the mountain rose.
And lovelier than the rose so red,
Yet paler than the violet pale,
She early left her sleepless bed,
The fairest maid of Teviotdale.

XXVI. Why does fair Margaret so early awake,
And don her kirtle so hastilie;
And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,
Why tremble her slender fingers to tie;
Why does she stop, and look often around,
As she glides down the secret stair;
And why does she pat the shaggy blood-hound,
As he rouses him up from his lair;
And, though she passes the postern alone,
Why is not the watchman's bugle blown?

XXVII. The ladye steps in doubt and dread,
Lest her watchful mother hear her tread;
The lady caresses the rough blood-hound,
Lest his voice should waken the castle round;

The watchman's bugle is not blown,
For he was her foster-father's son;
And she glides through the greenwood at dawn-
light
To meet Baron Henry, her own true knight.

XXVIII. The Knight and ladye fair are met,
And under the hawthorn's boughs are set.
A fairer pair were never seen
To meet beneath the hawthorn green.
He was stately, and young, and tall;
Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall:
And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,
Lent to her cheek a livelier red;
When the half sigh her swelling breast
Against the silken ribbon prest;
When her blue eyes their secret told,
Though shaded by her locks of gold—
Where would you find the peerless fair,
With Margaret of Branksome might compare!

XXIX. And now, fair dames, methinks I see
You listen to my minstrelsy;
Your waving locks ye backward throw,
And sidelong bend your necks of snow;
Ye ween to hear a melting tale,
Of two true lovers in a dale;
And how the Knight, with tender fire,
To paint his faithful passion strove;
Swore he might at her feet expire,
But never, never cease to love;
And how she blush'd, and how she sigh'd,
And, half consenting, half denied,
And said that she would die a maid;—
Yet, might the bloody feud be stay'd,
Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,
Margaret of Branksome's choice should be.

XXX. Alas! fair dames, your hopes are vain!
My harp has lost the enchanting strain;
Its lightness would my age reprove:
My hairs are grey, my limbs are old,
My heart is dead, my veins are cold:
I may not, must not, sing of love.

XXXI. Beneath an oak, moss'd o'er by eld,
The Baron's Dwarf his courser held,
And held his crested helm and spear:
That Dwarf was scarce an earthly man,

If the tales were true that of him ran
Through all the Border, far and near.
'Twas said, when the Baron a-hunting rode
Through Reedsdale's glens, but rarely trod,
He heard a voice cry, "Lost! lost! lost!"
And, like tennis-ball by racket toss'd,
A leap, of thirty feet and three,
Made from the gorse this elfin shape,
Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's knee.
Lord Cranstoun was some whit dismay'd;
'Tis said that five good miles he rade,
To rid him of his company;
But where he rode one mile, the Dwarf ran four,
And the Dwarf was first at the castle door.

XXXII. Use lessens marvel, it is said:
This elvish Dwarf with the Baron staid;
Little he ate, and less he spoke,
Nor mingled with the menial flock:
And oft apart his arms he toss'd,
And often mutter'd "Lost! lost! lost!"
He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,
But well Lord Cranstoun served he:
And he of his service was full fain;
For once he had been ta'en or slain,
An it had not been for his ministry.
All between Home and Hermitage,
Talk'd of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIII. For the Baron went on pilgrimage,
And took with him this elvish Page,
To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes:
For there, beside our Ladye's lake,
An offering he had sworn to make,
And he would pay his vows.
But the Ladye of Branksome gather'd a band
Of the best that would ride at her command:
The trysting place was Newark Lee.
Wat of Harden came thither amain,
And thither came John of Thirlestane,
And thither came William of Deloraine;
They were three hundred spears and three.
Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,
Their horses prance, their lances gleam.
They came to St. Mary's lake ere day;
But the chapel was void, and the Baron away.
They burn'd the chapel for very rage,
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page.

XXXIV. And now, in Branksome's good green wood,
As under the aged oak he stood,
The Baron's courser pricks his ears,
As if a distant noise he hears.
The Dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,
And signs to the lovers to part and fly;
No time was then to vow or sigh.
Fair Margaret through the hazel grove,
Flew like the startled cushat-dove:
The Dwarf the stirrup held and rein;
Vaulted the Knight on his steed amain,
And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
Rode eastward through the hawthorns green.

While thus he pour'd the lengthen'd tale
The Minstrel's voice began to fail:
Full slyly smiled the observant page,
And gave the wither'd hand of age
A goblet, crown'd with mighty wine,
The blood of Velez' scorched vine.
He raised the silver cup on high,
And, while the big drop fill'd his eye,
Pray'd God to bless the Duchess long,
And all who cheer'd a son of song.
The attending maidens smiled to see
How long, how deep, how zealously,
The precious juice the Minstrel quaff'd;
And he, embolden'd by the draught,
Look'd gaily back to them, and laugh'd.
The cordial nectar of the bowl
Swell'd his old veins, and cheer'd his soul;
A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
Ere thus his tale again began.

CANTO THIRD

I. And said I that my limbs were old,
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindly fire was fled,
And my poor wither'd heart was dead,
And that I might not sing of love?—
How could I to the dearest theme,
That ever warm'd a minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false a recreant prove!
How could I name love's very name,
Nor wake my heart to notes of flame!

II. In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

III. So thought Lord Cranstoun, as I ween,
While, pondering deep the tender scene,
He rode through Branksome's hawthorn green.
But the page shouted wild and shrill,
And scarce his helmet could he don,
When downward from the shady hill
A stately knight came pricking on.
That warrior's steed, so dapple-gray,
Was dark with sweat, and splashed with clay;
His armour red with many a stain:
He seem'd in such a weary plight,
As if he had ridden the live-long night;
For it was William of Deloraine.

IV. But no whit weary did he seem,
When, dancing in the sunny beam,
He mark'd the crane on the Baron's crest;
For his ready spear was in his rest.
Few were the words, and stern and high,
That mark'd the foemen's feudal hate;
For question fierce, and proud reply,
Gave signal soon of dire debate.
Their very coursers seem'd to know
That each was other's mortal foe,
And snorted fire, when wheel'd around,
To give each knight his vantage-ground.

V. In rapid round the Baron bent;
He sigh'd a sigh, and pray'd a prayer;
The prayer was to his patron saint,
The sigh was to his ladye fair.
Stout Deloraine nor sigh'd nor pray'd,
Nor saint, nor ladye, call'd to aid;
But he stoop'd his head, and couch'd his spear,
And spurred his steed to full career.
The meeting of these champions proud
Seem'd like the bursting thunder-cloud.

VI. Stern was the dint the Borderer lent!
The stately Baron backwards bent;
Bent backwards to his horse's tail,

And his plumes went scattering on the gale;
The tough ash spear, so stout and true,
Into a thousand flinders flew.
But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,
Pierced through, like silk, the Borderer's mail;
Through shield, and jack, and acton, past,
Deep in his bosom broke at last.—
Still sate the warrior saddle-fast,
Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,
Down went the steed, the girthing broke,
Hurl'd on a heap lay man and horse.
The Baron onward pass'd his course;
Nor knew—so giddy roll'd his brain—
His foe lay stretch'd upon the plain.

VII. But when he rein'd his courser round,
And saw his foeman on the ground
Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
He bade his page to stanch the wound,
And there beside the warrior stay,
And tend him in his doubtful state,
And lead him to Branksome castle-gate:
His noble mind was inly moved
For the kinsman of the maid he loved.
"This shalt thou do without delay:
No longer here myself may stay;
Unless the swifter I speed away,
Short shrift will be at my dying day."

VIII. Away in speed Lord Cranstoun rode;
The Goblin Page behind abode;
His lord's command he ne'er withstood,
Though small his pleasure to do good.
As the corslet off he took,
The dwarf espied the Mighty Book!
Much he marvell'd a knight of pride,
Like a book-bosom'd priest should ride:
He thought not to search or stanch the wound,
Until the secret he had found.

IX. The iron band, the iron clasp,
Resisted long the elfin grasp:
For when the first he had undone,
It closed as he the next begun.
Those iron clasps, that iron band,
Would not yield to unchristen'd hand,
Till he smear'd the cover o'er
With the Borderer's curdled gore;
A moment then the volume spread,

And one short spell therein he read,
It had much of glamour might,
Could make a ladye seem a knight;
The cobwebs on a dungeon wall
Seem tapestry in lordly hall;
A nut-shell seem a gilded barge,
A sheeling seem a palace large,
And youth seem age, and age seem youth—
All was delusion, nought was truth.

x. He had not read another spell,
When on his cheek a buffet fell,
So fierce, it stretch'd him on the plain,
Beside the wounded Deloraine.
From the ground he rose dismay'd,
And shook his huge and matted head;
One word he mutter'd, and no more,
"Man of age, thou smitest sore!"—
No more the Elfin Page durst try
Into the wondrous Book to pry;
The clasps, though smear'd with Christian gore,
Shut faster than they were before.
He hid it underneath his cloak.—
Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
I cannot tell, so mot I thrive;
It was not given by man alive.

xi. Unwillingly himself he address'd,
To do his master's high behest:
He lifted up the living corse,
And laid it on the weary horse;
He led him into Branksome Hall,
Before the beards of the warders all;
And each did after swear and say,
There only pass'd a wain of hay.
He took him to Lord David's tower,
Even to the Ladye's secret bower;
And, but that stronger spells were spread,
And the door might not be opened,
He had laid him on her very bed.
Whate'er he did of gramarye,
Was always done maliciously;
He flung the warrior on the ground,
And the blood well'd freshly from the wound.

xii. As he repass'd the outer court,
He spied the fair young child at sport:
He thought to train him to the wood;
For, at a word, be it understood,

He was always for ill, and never for good.
Seem'd to the boy, some comrade gay
Led him forth to the woods to play;
On the drawbridge the warders stout
Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.

XIII. He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
Until they came to a woodland brook;
The running stream dissolved the spell,
And his own elvish shape he took.
Could he have had his pleasure vilde,
He had crippled the joints of the noble child;
Or, with his fingers long and lean,
Had strangled him in fiendish spleen:
But his awful mother he had in dread,
And also his power was limited;
So he but scowl'd on the startled child,
And darted through the forest wild;
The woodland brook he bounding cross'd,
And laugh'd, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"

XIV. Full sore amazed at the wondrous change,
And frighten'd as a child might be,
At the wild yell and visage strange,
And the dark words of gramarye,
The child, amidst the forest bower,
Stood rooted like a lily flower;
And when at length, with trembling pace,
He sought to find where Branksome lay,
He fear'd to see that grisly face
Glare from some thicket on his way.
Thus, starting oft, he journey'd on,
And deeper in the wood is gone,—
For aye the more he sought his way,
The farther still he went astray,—
Until he heard the mountains round
Ring to the baying of a hound.

XV. And hark! and hark! the deep-mouth'd bark
Comes nigher still, and nigher:
Bursts on the path a dark blood-hound,
His tawny muzzle track'd the ground,
And his red eye shot fire.
Soon as the wilder'd child saw he,
He flew at him right furiouslie.
I ween you would have seen with joy
The bearing of the gallant boy,
When, worthy of his noble sire,
His wet cheek glow'd 'twixt fear and ire!

He faced the blood-hound manfully,
And held his little bat on high;
So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
At cautious distance hoarsely bay'd,
But still in act to spring;
When dash'd an archer through the glade,
And when he saw the hound was stay'd,
He drew his tough bow-string;
But a rough voice cried, "Shoot not, hoy!
Ho! shoot not, Edward—'Tis a boy!"

XVI. The speaker issued from the wood,
And check'd his fellow's surly mood,
And quell'd the ban-dog's ire:
He was an English yeoman good,
And born in Lancashire.
Well could he hit a fallow-deer
Five hundred feet him fro;
With hand more true, and eye more clear,
No archer bended bow.
His coal-black hair, shorn round and close,
Set off his sun-burn'd face:
Old England's sign, St. George's cross,
His barret-cap did grace;
His bugle-horn hung by his side,
All in a wolf-skin baldric tied;
And his short falchion, sharp and clear,
Had pierced the throat of many a deer.

XVII. His kirtle, made of forest green,
Reach'd scantly to his knee;
And, at his belt, of arrows keen
A furbish'd sheaf bore he;
His buckler, scarce in breadth a span,
No larger fence had he;
He never counted him a man,
Would strike below the knee:
His slacken'd bow was in his hand,
And the leash, that was his blood-hound's band.

XVIII. He would not do the fair child harm,
But held him with his powerful arm,
That he might neither fight nor flee;
For when the Red-Cross spied he,
The boy strove long and violently.
"Now, by St. George," the archer cries,
"Edward, methinks we have a prize!
This boy's fair face, and courage free,
Show he is come of high degree."—

XIX. "Yes! I am come of high degree,
For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch;
And, if thou dost not set me free,
False Southron, thou shalt dearly rue!
For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
And William of Deloraine, good at need,
And every Scott, from Esk to Tweed;
And, if thou dost not let me go,
Despite thy arrows, and thy bow,
I'll have thee hang'd to feed the crow!"—

XX. "Gramercy, for thy good-will, fair boy!
My mind was never set so high;
But if thou art chief of such a clan,
And art the son of such a man,
And ever comest to thy command,
Our wardens had need to keep good order;
My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
Thou'lt make them work upon the Border.
Meantime, be pleased to come with me,
For good Lord Dacre shalt thou see;
I think our work is well begun,
When we have taken thy father's son."

XXI. Although the child was led away,
In Branksome still he seem'd to stay,
For so the Dwarf his part did play;
And, in the shape of that young boy,
He wrought the castle much annoy.
The comrades of the young Buccleuch
He pinch'd, and beat, and overthrew;
Nay, some of them he wellnigh slew.
He tore Dame Maudlin's silken tire,
And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,
He lighted the match of his bandelier,
And wofully scorch'd the hackbuteer.
It may be hardly thought or said,
The mischief that the urchin made,
Till many of the castle guess'd,
That the young Baron was possess'd!

XXII. Well I ween the charm he held
The noble Ladye had soon dispell'd;
But she was deeply busied then
To tend the wounded Deloraine.
Much she wonder'd to find him lie,
On the stone threshold stretch'd along;
She thought some spirit of the sky
Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong;

Because, despite her precept dread,
Perchance he in the Book had read;
But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
And it was earthly steel and wood.

XXIII. She drew the splinter from the wound,
And with a charm she stanch'd the blood;
She bade the gash be cleansed and bound:
No longer by his couch she stood;
But she has ta'en the broken lance,
And wash'd it from the clotted gore,
And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.
William of Deloraine, in trance,
Whene'er she turn'd it round and round,
Twisted as if she gall'd his wound.
Then to her maidens she did say,
That he should be whole man and sound,
Within the course of a night and day.
Full long she toil'd; for she did rue
Mishap to friend so stout and true.

XXIV. So pass'd the day—the evening fell,
'Twas near the time of curfew bell;
The air was mild, the wind was calm,
The stream was smooth, the dew was balm;
E'en the rude watchman, on the tower,
Enjoy'd and bless'd the lovely hour.
Far more fair Margaret loved and bless'd
The hour of silence and of rest.
On the high turret sitting lone,
She waked at times the lute's soft tone;
Touch'd a wild note, and all between
Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.
Her golden hair stream'd free from band,
Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
Her blue eyes sought the west afar,
For lovers love the western star.

XXV. Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
That rises slowly to her ken,
And, spreading broad its wavering light,
Shakes its loose tresses on the night?
Is yon red glare the western star?—
O, 'tis the beacon-blaze of war!
Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath,
For well she knew the fire of death!

XXVI. The Warder view'd it blazing strong,
And blew his war-note loud and long,

Till, at the high and haughty sound,
Rock, wood, and river, rung around.
The blast alarm'd the festal hall,
And startled forth the warriors all;
Far downward, in the castle-yard,
Full many a torch and cresset glared;
And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,
Were in the blaze half-seen, half-lost;
And spears in wild disorder shook,
Like reeds beside a frozen brook.

XXVII. The Seneschal, whose silver hair
Was redden'd by the torches' glare,
Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,
And issued forth his mandates loud:—
"On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
And three are kindling on Priesthaughswire;
Ride out, ride out,
The foe to scout!
Mount, mount for Branksome, every man!
Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone clan,
That ever are true and stout—
Ye need not send to Liddesdale;
For when they see the blazing bale,
Elliots and Armstrongs never fail.—
Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life!
And warn the Warder of the strife.
Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze,
Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise."

XXVIII. Fair Margaret, from the turret head,
Heard, far below, the coursers' tread,
While loud the harness rung,
As to their seats, with clamour dread,
The ready horsemen sprung:
And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,
And leaders' voices, mingled notes,
And out! and out!
In hasty route,
The horsemen gallop'd forth;
Dispersing to the south to scout,
And east, and west, and north,
To view their coming enemies,
And warn their vassals and allies.

XXIX. The ready page, with hurried hand,
Awaked the need-fire's slumbering brand,
And ruddy blush'd the heaven:
For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,

Waved like a blood-flag on the sky,
All flaring and uneven;
And soon a score of fires, I ween,
From height, and hill, and cliff, were seen;
Each with warlike tidings fraught;
Each from each the signal caught;
Each after each they glanced to sight,
As stars arise upon the night.
They gleam'd on many a dusky tarn,
Haunted by the lonely earn;
On many a cairn's grey pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid;
Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,
From Soltra and Dumpender Law;
And Lothian heard the Regent's order,
That all should bowne them for the Border.

XXX. The livelong night in Branksome rang
The ceaseless sound of steel;
The castle-bell, with backward clang,
Sent forth the larum peal;
Was frequent heard the heavy jar,
Where massy stone and iron bar
Were piled on echoing keep and tower,
To whelm the foe with deadly shower;
Was frequent heard the changing guard,
And watch-word from the sleepless ward;
While, wearied by the endless din,
Blood-hound and ban-dog yell'd within.

XXXI. The noble Dame, amid the broil,
Shared the grey Seneschal's high toil,
And spoke of danger with a smile;
Cheer'd the young knights, and council sage
Held with the chiefs of riper age.
No tidings of the foe were brought,
Nor of his numbers knew they aught,
Nor what in time of truce he sought.
Some said, that there were thousands ten;
And others ween'd that it was nought
But Leven Clans, or Tynedale men,
Who came to gather in black-mail;
And Liddesdale, with small avail,
Might drive them lightly back agen.
So pass'd the anxious night away,
And welcome was the peep of day.

Ceased the high sound—the listening throng
Applaud the Master of the Song;

And marvel much, in helpless age,
So hard should be his pilgrimage.
Had he no friend—no daughter dear,
His wandering toil to share and cheer;
No son to be his father's stay,
And guide him on the rugged way?
"Ay, once he had—but he was dead!"—
Upon the harp he stoop'd his head,
And busied himself the strings withal,
To hide the tear that fain would fall.
In solemn measure, soft and slow,
Arose a father's notes of woe.

CANTO FOURTH

I. Sweet Teviot! on thy silver tide
The glaring bale-fires blaze no more;
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willow'd shore;
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,
All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves, since Time was born,
Since first they roll'd upon the Tweed,
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor started at the bugle-horn.

II. Unlike the tide of human time,
Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,
Retains each grief, retains each crime
Its earliest course was doom'd to know;
And, darker as it downward bears,
Is stain'd with past and present tears.
Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,
It still reflects to Memory's eye
The hour my brave, my only boy,
Fell by the side of great Dundee.
Why, when the volleying musket play'd
Against the bloody Highland blade,
Why was not I beside him laid!—
Enough—he died the death of fame;
Enough—he died with conquering Græme.

III. Now over Border, dale and fell,
Full wide and far was terror spread;
For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.
The frighten'd flocks and herds were pent
Beneath the peel's rude battlement;

And maids and matrons dropp'd the tear,
While ready warriors seized the spear.
From Branksome's towers, the watchman's eye
Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy,
Which, curling in the rising sun,
Show'd southern ravage was begun.

IV. Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried—
"Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
Watt Tinlinn, from the Liddel-side,
Comes wading through the flood.
Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
At his lone gate, and prove the lock;
It was but last St. Barnabright
They sieged him a whole summer night,
But fled at morning; well they knew,
In vain he never twang'd the yew.
Right sharp has been the evening shower,
That drove him from his Liddel tower;
And, by my faith," the gate-ward said,
"I think 'twill prove a Warden-Raid."

V. While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
Enter'd the echoing barbican.
He led a small and shaggy nag,
That through a bog, from hag to hag,
Could bound like any Billhope stag.
It bore his wife and children twain;
A half-clothed serf was all their train;
His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-brow'd,
Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,
Laugh'd to her friends among the crowd.
He was of stature passing tall,
But sparely form'd, and lean withal;
A batter'd morion on his brow;
A leather jack, as fence enow,
On his broad shoulders loosely hung;
A border axe behind was slung;
His spear, six Scottish ells in length,
Seem'd newly dyed with gore;
His shafts and bow, of wondrous strength,
His hardy partner bore.

VI. Thus to the Ladye did Tinlinn show
The tidings of the English foe:—
"Belted Will Howard is marching here,
And hot Lord Dacre, with many a spear,
And all the German hackbut-men,
Who have long lain at Askerten:

They cross'd the Liddel at curfew hour,
And burn'd my little lonely tower:
The fiend receive their souls therefor!
It had not been burnt this year and more.
Barn-yard and dwelling, blazing bright,
Served to guide me on my flight;
But I was chased the livelong night.
Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Græme,
Fast upon my traces came,
Until I turn'd at Priesthaugh Scrogg,
And shot their horses in the bog,
Slew Fergus with my lance outright—
I had him long at high despite:
He drove my cows last Fastern's night.

VII. Now weary scouts from Liddesdale,
Fast hurrying in, confirm'd the tale;
As far as they could judge by ken,
Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand
Three thousand armed Englishmen—
Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,
From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,
Came in, their Chief's defence to aid.
There was saddling and mounting in haste,
There was pricking o'er moor and lea;
He that was last at the trysting-place
Was but lightly held of his gaye ladye.

VIII. From fair St. Mary's silver wave,
From dreary Gamescleugh's dusky height,
His ready lances Thirlestane brave
Array'd beneath a banner bright.
The tressured fleur-de-luce he claims,
To wreathe his shield, since royal James,
Encamp'd by Fala's mossy wave,
The proud distinction grateful gave,
For faith 'mid feudal jars;
What time, save Thirlestane alone,
Of Scotland's stubborn barons none
Would march to southern wars;
And hence, in fair remembrance worn,
Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne;
Hence his high motto shines reveal'd—
"Ready, aye ready," for the field.

IX. An aged Knight, to danger steel'd,
With many a moss-trooper, came on;
And azure in a golden field,
The stars and crescent graced his shield,
Without the bend of Murdieston.

Wide lay his lands round Oakwood tower,
And wide round haunted Castle-Ower;
High over Borthwick's mountain flood,
His wood-embosom'd mansion stood;
In the dark glen, so deep below,
The herds of plunder'd England low;
His bold retainers' daily food,
And bought with danger, blows, and blood.
Marauding chief! his sole delight
The moonlight raid, the morning fight;
Not even the Flower of Yarrow's charms,
In youth, might tame his rage for arms;
And still, in age, he spurn'd at rest,
And still his brows the helmet press'd,
Albeit the blanched locks below
Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow;
Five stately warriors drew the sword
Before their father's band;
A braver knight than Harden's lord
Ne'er belted on a brand.

x. Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,
Came trooping down the Todshawhill;
By the sword they won their land,
And by the sword they hold it still.
Hearken, Ladye, to the tale,
How thy sires won fair Eskdale.—
Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,
The Beattisons were his vassals there.
The Earl was gentle, and mild of mood,
The vassals were warlike, and fierce, and rude;
High of heart, and haughty of word,
Little they reck'd of a tame liege lord.
The Earl into fair Eskdale came,
Homage and seignory to claim:
Of Gilbert the Galliard a heriot he sought,
Saying, "Give thy best steed, as a vassal ought."
—"Dear to me is my bonny white steed,
Oft has he help'd me at pinch of need;
Lord and Earl though thou be, I trow,
I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou."—
Word on word gave fuel to fire,
Till so highly blazed the Beattison's ire,
But that the Earl the flight had ta'en,
The vassals there their lord had slain.
Sore he plied both whip and spur,
As he urged his steed through Eskdale muir;
And it fell down a weary weight,
Just on the threshold of Branksome gate.

XI. The Earl was a wrathful man to see,
Full fain avenged would he be.
In haste to Branksome's Lord he spoke,
Saying—" Take these traitors to thy yoke;
For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold,
All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold:
Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattisons' clan
If thou leavest on Eske a landed man;
But spare Woodkerrick's lands alone,
For he lent me his horse to escape upon."
A glad man then was Branksome bold,
Down he flung him the purse of gold;
To Eskdale soon he spurr'd amain,
And with him five hundred riders has ta'en.
He left his merrymen in the mist of the hill,
And bade them hold them close and still;
And alone he wended to the plain,
To meet with the Galliard and all his train.
To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said:—
" Know thou me for thy liege-lord and head,
Deal not with me as with Morton tame,
For Scotts play best at the roughest game.
Give me in peace my heriot due,
Thy bonny white steed, or thou shalt rue.
If my horn I three times wind,
Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind."—

XII. Loudly the Beattison laugh'd in scorn;
" Little care we for thy winded horn.
Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot,
To yield his steed to a haughty Scott.
Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,
With rusty spur and miry boot."—
He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse,
That the dun deer started at fair Craikcross;
He blew again so loud and clear,
Through the grey mountain-mist there did lances
appear;
And the third blast rang with such a din,
That the echoes answer'd from Pentoun-linn,
And all his riders came lightly in.
Then had you seen a gallant shock,
When saddles were emptied, and lances broke!
For each scornful word the Galliard had said,
A Beattison on the field was laid.
His own good sword the chieftain drew,
And he bore the Galliard through and through;
Where the Beattisons' blood mix'd with the rill,
The Galliard's-Haugh men call it still.

The Scotts have scatter'd the Beattison clan,
In Eskdale they left but one landed man.
The valley of Eske, from the mouth to the source,
Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

XIII. Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
And warriors more than I may name;
From Yarrow-cleugh to Hindhaugh-swair,
From Woodhouselie to Chester-glen,
Troop'd man and horse, and bow and spear;
Their gathering word was Bellenden.
And better hearts o'er Border sod
To siege or rescue never rode.
The Ladye mark'd the aids come in,
And high her heart of pride arose:
She bade her youthful son attend,
That he might know his father's friend,
And learn to face his foes.
"The boy is ripe to look on war;
I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
And his true arrow struck afar
The raven's nest upon the cliff;
The red cross, on a southern breast,
Is broader than the raven's nest:
Thou, Whitslade, shalt teach him his weapon to wield,
And o'er him hold his father's shield."

XIV. Well may you think, the wily page
Cared not to face the Ladye sage.
He counterfeited childish fear,
And shriek'd, and shed full many a tear,
And moan'd and plain'd in manner wild.
The attendants to the Ladye told,
Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
That wont to be so free and bold.
Then wrathful was the noble dame;
She blush'd blood-red for very shame:—
"Hence! ere the clan his faintness view;
Hence with the weakling to Buccleuch!—
Watt Tinlinn, thou shalt be his guide
To Rangleburn's lonely side.—
Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,
That coward should e'er be son of mine!"—

XV. A heavy task Watt Tinlinn had,
To guide the counterfeited lad.
Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
Of that ill-omen'd elfish freight,

He bolted, sprung, and rear'd amain,
Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.
It cost Watt Tinlinn mickle toil
To drive him but a Scottish mile;
But as a shallow brook they cross'd,
The elf, amid the running stream,
His figure changed, like form in dream,
And fled, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"
Full fast the urchin ran and laugh'd,
But faster still a cloth-yard shaft
Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew,
And pierced his shoulder through and through.
Although the imp might not be slain,
And though the wound soon heal'd again,
Yet, as he ran, he yell'd for pain;
And Watt of Tinlinn, much aghast,
Rode back to Branksome fiery fast.

XVI. Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood;
And martial murmurs, from below,
Proclaim'd the approaching southern foe.
Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
Were Border pipes and bugles blown;
The coursers' neighing he could ken,
A measured tread of marching men;
While broke at times the solemn hum,
The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;
And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
Above the copse appear;
And, glistening through the hawthorns green,
Shine helm, and shield, and spear.

XVII. Light forayers, first, to view the ground,
Spurr'd their fleet coursers loosely round;
Behind, in close array, and fast,
The Kendal archers, all in green,
Obedient to the bugle blast,
Advancing from the wood were seen.
To back and guard the archer band,
Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand:
A hardy race, on Irthing bred,
With kirtles white, and crosses red,
Array'd beneath the banner tall,
That stream'd o'er Acre's conquer'd wall;
And minstrels, as they march'd in order,
Play'd, "Noble Lord Dacre, he dwells on the Border."

XVIII. Behind the English bill and bow,
The mercenaries, firm and slow,
Moved on to fight, in dark array,
By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,
Who brought the band from distant Rhine,
And sold their blood for foreign pay.
The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country, own'd no lord:
They were not arm'd like England's sons,
But bore the levin-darting guns;
Buff coats, all frounced and 'broider'd o'er,
And morsing-horns and scarfs they wore;
Each better knee was bared, to aid
The warriors in the escalade;
All, as they march'd, in rugged tongue,
Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung.

XIX. But louder still the clamour grew,
And louder still the minstrels blew,
When, from beneath the greenwood tree,
Rode forth Lord Howard's chivalry;
His men-at-arms, with glaive and spear,
Brought up the battle's glittering rear,
There many a youthful knight, full keen
To gain his spurs, in arms was seen;
With favour in his crest, or glove,
Memorial of his ladye-love.
So rode they forth in fair array,
Till full their lengthen'd lines display;
Then call'd a halt, and made a stand,
And cried, "St. George, for merry England!"

XX. Now every English eye, intent
On Branksome's armed towers was bent;
So near they were, that they might know
The straining harsh of each cross-bow;
On battlement and bartizan
Gleam'd axe, and spear, and partisan;
Falcon and culver, on each tower,
Stood prompt their deadly hail to shower;
And flashing armour frequent broke
From eddying whirls of sable smoke,
Where upon tower and turret head,
The seething pitch and molten lead
Reek'd, like a witch's caldron red.
While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,
The wicket opes, and from the wall
Rides forth the hoary Seneschal.

XXI. Armed he rode, all save the head,
His white beard o'er his breast-plate spread;
Unbroke by age, erect his seat,
He ruled his eager courser's gait;
Forced him, with chasten'd fire, to prance,
And, high curvetting, slow advance:
In sign of truce, his better hand
Display'd a peeled willow wand;
His squire, attending in the rear,
Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.
When they espied him riding out,
Lord Howard and Lord Dacre stout
Sped to the front of their array,
To hear what this old knight should say.

XXII. "Ye English warden lords, of you
Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,
Why, 'gainst the truce of Border tide,
In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
And all yon mercenary band,
Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
My Ladye reads you swith return;
And, if but one poor straw you burn,
Or do our towers so much molest,
As scare one swallow from her nest,
St. Mary! but we'll light a brand
Shall warm your hearths in Cumberland."—

XXIII. A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
But calmer Howard took the word:
"May't please thy Dame, Sir Seneschal,
To seek the castle's outward wall,
Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show
Both why we came, and when we go."—
The message sped, the noble Dame
To the wall's outward circle came;
Each chief around lean'd on his spear,
To see the pursuivant appear.
All in Lord Howard's livery dress'd,
The lion argent deck'd his breast;
He led a boy of blooming hue—
O sight to meet a mother's view!
It was the heir of great Buccleuch.
Obeisance meet the herald made,
And thus his master's will he said:—

XXIV. "It irks, high Dame, my noble Lords,
'Gainst ladye fair to draw their swords;

But yet they may not tamely see,
All through the Western Wardenry,
Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,
And burn and spoil the Border-side;
And ill beseems your rank and birth
To make your towers a flemens-firth.
We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
That he may suffer march-treason pain.
It was but last St. Cuthbert's even
He prick'd to Stapleton on Leven,
Harried the lands of Richard Musgrave,
And slew his brother by dint of glaive.
Then, since a lone and widow'd Dame
These restless riders may not tame,
Either receive within thy towers
Two hundred of my master's powers,
Or straight they sound their warrison,
And storm and spoil thy garrison:
And this fair boy, to London led,
Shall good King Edward's page be bred."

XXV. He ceased—and loud the boy did cry,
And stretch'd his little arms on high;
Implored for aid each well-known face,
And strove to seek the Dame's embrace.
A moment changed that Ladye's cheer,
Gush'd to her eye the unbidden tear;
She gazed upon the leaders round,
And dark and sad each warrior frown'd;
Then, deep within her sobbing breast
She lock'd the struggling sigh to rest;
Unalter'd and collected stood,
And thus replied, in dauntless mood:—

XXVI. "Say to your Lords of high emprize,
Who war on women and on boys,
That either William of Deloraine
Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain,
Or else he will the combat take
'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake.
No knight in Cumberland so good,
But William may count with him kin and blood.
Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,
When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford;
And but Lord Dacre's steed was wight,
And bare him ably in the flight,
Himself had seen him dubb'd a knight.
For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid, and God be mine;

Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.
Then, if thy Lords their purpose urge,
Take our defiance loud and high;
Our slogan is their lyke-wake dirge,
Our moat, the grave where they shall lie."

XXVII. Proud she look'd round, applause to claim—
Then lighten'd Thirlestane's eye of flame;
His bugle Wat of Harden blew;
Pensils and pennons wide were flung,
To heaven the Border slogan rung,
"St. Mary for the young Buccleuch!"
The English war-cry answer'd wide,
And forward bent each southern spear;
Each Kendal archer made a stride,
And drew the bowstring to his ear;
Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown:—
But, ere a gray-goose shaft had flown,
A horseman gallop'd from the rear.

XXVIII. "Ah! noble Lords!" he breathless said,
"What treason has your march betray'd?
What make you here, from aid so far,
Before you walls, around you war?
Your foemen triumph in the thought,
That in the toils the lion's caught.
Already on dark Ruberslaw
The Douglas holds his weapon-schaw;
The lances, waving in his train,
Clothe the dun heath like autumn grain;
And on the Liddel's northern strand,
To bar retreat to Cumberland,
Lord Maxwell ranks his merry-men good,
Beneath the eagle and the rood;
And Jedwood, Eske, and Teviotdale,
Have to proud Angus come;
And all the Merse and Lauderdale
Have risen with haughty Home.
An exile from Northumberland,
In Liddesdale I've wander'd long;
But still my heart was with merry England,
And cannot brook my country's wrong;
And hard I've spurr'd all night, to show
The mustering of the coming foe."

XXIX. "And let them come!" fierce Dacre cried;
"For soon yon crest, my father's pride,
That swept the shores of Judah's sea,

And waved in gales of Galilee,
From Branksome's highest towers display'd,
Shall mock the rescue's lingering aid!—
Level each harquebuss on row;
Draw, merry archers, draw the bow;
Up, bill-men, to the walls, and cry,
Dacre for England, win or die!"—

xxx. "Yet hear," quoth Howard, "calmly hear,
Nor deem my words the words of fear:
For who, in field or foray slack,
Saw the blanche lion e'er fall back?
But thus to risk our Border flower
In strife against a kingdom's power,
Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thousands three,
Certes, were desperate policy.
Nay, take the terms the Ladye made,
Ere conscious of the advancing aid:
Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
In single fight, and, if he gain,
He gains for us; but if he's cross'd,
'Tis but a single warrior lost:
The rest, retreating as they came,
Avoid defeat, and death, and shame."

xxxi. Ill could the haughty Dacre brook
His brother Warden's sage rebuke;
And yet his forward step he staid,
And slow and sullenly obey'd.
But ne'er again the Border side
Did these two lords in friendship ride;
And this slight discontent, men say,
Cost blood upon another day.

xxxii. The pursuivant-at-arms again
Before the castle took his stand;
His trumpet call'd, with parleying strain,
The leaders of the Scottish band;
And he defied, in Musgrave's right,
Stout Deloraine to single fight;
A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
And thus the terms of fight he said:—
"If in the lists good Musgrave's sword
Vanquish the Knight of Deloraine,
Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's Lord,
Shall hostage for his clan remain:
If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
The boy his liberty shall have.

Howe'er it falls, the English band,
Unharming Scots, by Scots unharm'd,
In peaceful march, like men unarm'd,
Shall straight retreat to Cumberland."

XXXIII. Unconscious of the near relief,
The proffer pleased each Scottish chief,
Though much the Ladye sage gainsay'd;
For though their hearts were brave and true,
From Jedwood's recent sack they knew,
How tardy was the Regent's aid:
And you may guess the noble Dame
Durst not the secret prescience own,
Sprung from the art she might not name,
By which the coming help was known.
Closed was the compact, and agreed
That lists should be enclosed with speed,
Beneath the castle, on a lawn:
They fix'd the morrow for the strife,
On foot, with Scottish axe and knife,
At the fourth hour from peep of dawn;
When Deloraine, from sickness freed,
Or else a champion in his stead,
Should for himself and chieftain stand,
Against stout Musgrave, hand to hand.

XXXIV. I know right well, that, in their lay,
Full many minstrels sing and say,
Such combat should be made on horse,
On foaming steed, in full career,
With brand to aid, when as the spear
Should shiver in the course:
But he, the jovial Harper, taught
Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,
In guise which now I say;
He knew each ordinance and clause
Of Black Lord Archibald's battle-laws,
In the old Douglas' day.
He brook'd not, he, that scoffing tongue
Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,
Or call his song untrue:
For this, when they the goblet plied,
And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,
The Bard of Reull he slew.
On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,
And tuneful hands were stain'd with blood;
Where still the thorn's white branches wave,
Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

xxxv. Why should I tell the rigid doom,
That dragg'd my master to his tomb;
How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,
Wept till their eyes were dead and dim,
And wrung their hands for love of him,
Who died at Jedwood Air?
He died!—his scholars, one by one,
To the cold silent grave are gone;
And I, alas! survive alone,
To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
And grieve that I shall hear no more
The strains, with envy heard before;
For, with my minstrel brethren fled,
My jealousy of song is dead.

———

He paused: the listening dames again
Applaud the hoary Minstrel's strain.
With many a word of kindly cheer,—
In pity half, and half sincere,—
Marvell'd the Duchess how so well
His legendary song could tell—
Of ancient deeds, so long forgot;
Of feuds, whose memory was not;
Of forests, now laid waste and bare;
Of towers, which harbour now the hare;
Of manners, long since changed and gone;
Of chiefs, who under their grey stone
So long had slept, that fickle Fame
Had blotted from her rolls their name,
And twined round some new minion's head
The fading wreath for which they bled;
In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse
Could call them from their marble hearse.

The Harper smiled, well-pleased; for ne'er
Was flattery lost on poet's ear:
A simple race! they waste their toil
For the vain tribute of a smile;
E'en when in age their flame expires,
Her dulcet breath can fan its fires:
Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,
And strives to trim the short-lived blaze.

Smiled then, well-pleased, the Aged Man,
And thus his tale continued ran.

CANTO FIFTH

I. Call it not vain:—they do not err,
Who say, that when the Poet dies,
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies:
Who say, tall cliff, and cavern lone,
For the departed Bard make moan;
That mountains weep in crystal rill;
That flowers in tears of balm distil;
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply;
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirges round his grave.

II. Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
Those things inanimate can mourn;
But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
Is vocal with the plaintive wail
Of those, who, else forgotten long,
Lived in the poet's faithful song,
And, with the poet's parting breath,
Whose memory feels a second death.
The Maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
That love, true love, should be forgot,
From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
Upon the gentle Minstrel's bier:
The phantom Knight, his glory fled,
Mourns o'er the field he heap'd with dead;
Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
And shrieks along the battle-plain.
The Chief, whose antique crownlet long
Still sparkled in the feudal song,
Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
Sees, in the thanedom once his own,
His ashes undistinguish'd lie,
His place, his power, his memory die:
His groans the lonely caverns fill,
His tears of rage impel the rill:
All mourn the Minstrel's harp unstrung,
Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

III. Scarcely the hot assault was staid,
The terms of truce were scarcely made,
When they could spy, from Branksome's towers,
The advancing march of martial powers.
Thick clouds of dust afar appear'd,
And trampling steeds were faintly heard;

Bright spears, above the columns dun,
Glanced momentary to the sun;
And feudal banners fair display'd
The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.

IV. Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
From the fair Middle Marches came;
The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
Announcing Douglas, dreaded name!
Vails not to tell what steeds did spurn,
Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburne
Their men in battle-order set;
And Swinton laid the lance in rest,
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.
Nor list I say what hundreds more,
From the rich Merse and Lammermore,
And Tweed's fair borders, to the war,
Beneath the crest of Old Dunbar,
And Hepburn's mingled banners come,
Down the steep mountain glittering far,
And shouting still, "A Home! a Home!"

V. Now squire and knight, from Branksome sent,
On many a courteous message went;
To every chief and lord they paid
Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid;
And told them,—how a truce was made,
And how a day of fight was ta'en
'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine;
And how the Ladye pray'd them dear,
That all would stay the fight to see,
And deign, in love and courtesy,
To taste of Branksome cheer.
Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,
Were England's noble Lords forgot.
Himself, the hoary Seneschal
Rode forth, in seemly terms to call
Those gallant foes to Branksome Hall.
Accepted Howard, than whom knight
Was never dubb'd, more bold in fight;
Nor, when from war and armour free,
More famed for stately courtesy:
But angry Dacre rather chose
In his pavilion to repose.

VI. Now, noble Dame, perchance you ask,
How these two hostile armies met?
Deeming it were no easy task
To keep the truce which here was set;

Where martial spirits, all on fire,
Breathed only blood and mortal ire.—
By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
By habit, and by nation, foes,
They met on Teviot's strand;
They met and sate them mingled down,
Without a threat, without a frown,
As brothers meet in foreign land:
The hands, the spear that lately grasp'd,
Still in the mailed gauntlet clasp'd,
Were interchanged in greeting dear;
Visors were raised, and faces shown,
And many a friend, to friend made known,
Partook of social cheer.
Some drove the jolly bowl about;
With dice and draughts some chased the day;
And some, with many a merry shout,
In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the foot-ball play.

VII. Yet, be it known, had bugles blown,
Or sign of war been seen,
Those bands, so fair together ranged,
Those hands, so frankly interchanged,
Had dyed with gore the green:
The merry shout by Teviot-side
Had sunk in war-cries wild and wide,
And in the groan of death;
And whingers, now in friendship bare,
The social meal to part and share,
Had found a bloody sheath.
'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
In the old Border-day:
But yet on Branksome's towers and town,
In peaceful merriment, sunk down
The sun's declining ray.

VIII. The blithsome signs of wassel gay
Decay'd not with the dying day;
Soon through the latticed windows tall
Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
Divided square by shafts of stone,
Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone;
Nor less the gilded rafters rang
With merry harp and beakers' clang:
And frequent, on the darkening plain,
Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
As bands, their stragglers to regain,
Give the shrill watchword of their clan;

And revellers, o'er their bowls, proclaim
Douglas or Dacre's conquering name.

IX. Less frequent heard, and fainter still,
At length the various clamours died:
And you might hear, from Branksome hill,
No sound but Teviot's rushing tide;
Save when the changing sentinel
The challenge of his watch could tell;
And save, where, through the dark profound,
The clanging axe and hammer's sound
Rung from the nether lawn;
For many a busy hand toil'd there,
Strong pales to shape, and beams to square,
The lists' dread barriers to prepare
Against the morrow's dawn.

X. Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
Despite the Dame's reproving eye;
Nor mark'd she, as she left her seat,
Full many a stifled sigh;
For many a noble warrior strove
To win the Flower of Teviot's love,
And many a bold ally,—
With throbbing head and anxious heart,
All in her lonely bower apart,
In broken sleep she lay:
By times, from silken couch she rose;
While yet the banner'd hosts repose,
She view'd the dawning day:
Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
First woke the loveliest and the best.

XI. She gazed upon the inner court,
Which in the tower's tall shadow lay;
Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,
Had rung the livelong yesterday;
Now still as death; till stalking slow,—
The jingling spurs announced his tread,—
A stately warrior pass'd below;
But when he raised his plumed head—
Blessed Mary! can it be?—
Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,
He walks through Branksome's hostile towers,
With fearless step and free.
She dared not sign, she dared not speak—
Oh! if one page's slumbers break,
His blood the price must pay!
Not all the pearls Queen Mary wears,

Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,
Shall buy his life a day.

XII. Yet was his hazard small; for well
You may bethink you of the spell
Of that sly urchin page;
This to his lord he did impart,
And made him seem, by glamour art,
A knight from Hermitage.
Unchallenged thus, the warder's post,
The court, unchallenged, thus he cross'd,
For all the vassalage:
But O! what magic's quaint disguise
Could blind fair Margaret's azure eyes!
She started from her seat;
While with surprise and fear she strove,
And both could scarcely master love—
Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII. Oft have I mused, what purpose bad
That foul malicious urchin had
To bring this meeting round;
For happy love's a heavenly sight,
And by a vile malignant sprite
In such no joy is found;
And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought
Their erring passion might have wrought
Sorrow, and sin, and shame;
And death to Cranstoun's gallant Knight,
And to the gentle ladye bright,
Disgrace, and loss of fame.
But earthly spirit could not tell
The heart of them that loved so well.
True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven:
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.—
Now leave we Margaret and her Knight,
To tell you of the approaching fight.

XIV. Their warning blasts the bugles blew,
The pipe's shrill port aroused each clan;
In haste, the deadly strife to view,
The trooping warriors eager ran:

Thick round the lists their lances stood,
Like blasted pines in Ettrick wood;
To Branksome many a look they threw,
The combatants' approach to view,
And bandied many a word of boast,
About the knight each favour'd most.

xv. Meantime full anxious was the Dame;
For now arose disputed claim,
Of who should fight for Deloraine,
'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestane:
They 'gan to reckon kin and rent,
And frowning brow on brow was bent;
But yet not long the strife—for, lo!
Himself, the Knight of Deloraine,
Strong, as it seem'd, and free from pain,
In armour sheath'd from top to toe,
Appear'd, and craved the combat due.
The Dame her charm successful knew,
And the fierce chiefs their claims withdrew.

xvi. When for the lists they sought the plain,
The stately Ladye's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold;
Unarm'd by her side he walk'd,
And much, in courteous phrase, they talk'd
Of feats of arms of old.
Costly his garb—his Flemish ruff
Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of buff,
With satin slash'd and lined;
Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,
His cloak was all of Poland fur,
His hose with silver twined;
His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt;
Hence, in rude phrase, the Borderers still
Call'd noble Howard, Belted Will.

xvii. Behind Lord Howard and the Dame,
Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,
Whose foot-cloth swept the ground:
White was her wimple, and her veil,
And her loose locks a chaplet pale
Of whitest roses bound;
The lordly Angus, by her side,
In courtesy to cheer her tried;
Without his aid, her hand in vain
Had strove to guide her broider'd rein.
He deem'd, she shudder'd at the sight

Of warriors met for mortal fight;
But cause of terror, all unguess'd,
Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
When, in their chairs of crimson placed,
The Dame and she the barriers graced.

XVIII. Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,
An English knight led forth to view;
Scarce rued the boy his present plight,
So much he long'd to see the fight.
Within the lists, in knightly pride,
High Home and haughty Dacre ride;
Their leading staffs of steel they wield,
As marshals of the mortal field;
While to each knight their care assign'd
Like vantage of the sun and wind.
Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,
In King and Queen, and Warden's name,
That none, while lasts the strife,
Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,
Aid to a champion to afford,
On peril of his life;
And not a breath the silence broke,
Till thus the alternate Heralds spoke:—

ENGLISH HERALD

XIX. "Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,
Good knight and true, and freely born,
Amends from Deloraine to crave,
For foul despiteous scathe and scorn.
He sayeth, that William of Deloraine
Is traitor false by Border laws;
This with his sword he will maintain,
So help him God, and his good cause!"

SCOTTISH HERALD

XX. "Here standeth William of Deloraine,
Good knight and true, of noble strain,
Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain,
Since he bore arms, ne'er soil'd his coat;
And that, so help him God above!
He will on Musgrave's body prove,
He lies most foully in his throat."

LORD DACRE

"Forward, brave champions, to the fight!
Sound trumpets!"——

——"God defend the right!"—
Then, Teviot! how thine echoes rang,
When bugle-sound and trumpet-clang
Let loose the martial foes,
And in mid list, with shield poised high,
And measured step and wary eye,
The combatants did close.

XXI. Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
Ye lovely listeners, to hear
How to the axe the helms did sound,
And blood pour'd down from many a wound;
For desperate was the strife and long,
And either warrior fierce and strong.
But, were each dame a listening knight,
I well could tell how warriors fight!
For I have seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,
Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing,
And scorn'd, amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life.—

XXII. 'Tis done, 'tis done! that fatal blow
Has stretch'd him on the bloody plain;
He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no!
Thence never shalt thou rise again!
He chokes in blood—some friendly hand
Undo the visor's barred band,
Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
And give him room for life to gasp!—
O, bootless aid!—haste, holy Friar,
Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
And smooth his path from earth to heaven!

XXIII. In haste the holy Friar sped;—
His naked foot was dyed with red,
As through the lists he ran;
Unmindful of the shouts on high,
That hail'd the conqueror's victory,
He raised the dying man;
Loose waved his silver beard and hair,
As o'er him he kneel'd down in prayer;
And still the crucifix on high
He holds before his darkening eye;
And still he bends an anxious ear,
His faltering penitence to hear;

Still props him from the bloody sod,
Still, even when soul and body part,
Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
And bids him trust in God!
Unheard he prays;—the death-pang's o'er!
Richard of Musgrave breathes no more.

XXIV. As if exhausted in the fight,
Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
The silent victor stands;
His beaver did he not unclasp,
Mark'd not the shouts, felt not the grasp
Of gratulating hands.
When lo! strange cries of wild surprise,
Mingled with seeming terror, rise
Among the Scottish bands;
And all, amid the throng'd array,
In panic haste gave open way
To a half-naked ghastly man,
Who downward from the castle ran:
He cross'd the barriers at a bound,
And wild and haggard look'd around,
As dizzy, and in pain;
And all, upon the armed ground,
Knew William of Deloraine!
Each ladye sprung from seat with speed;
Vaulted each marshal from his steed;
"And who art thou," they cried,
"Who hast this battle fought and won?"—
His plumed helm was soon undone—
"Cranstoun of Teviot-side!
For this fair prize I've fought and won,"—
And to the Ladye led her son.

XXV. Full oft the rescued boy she kiss'd,
And often press'd him to her breast;
For, under all her dauntless show,
Her heart had throbb'd at every blow;
Yet not Lord Cranstoun deign'd she greet,
Though low he kneeled at her feet.
Me lists not tell what words were made,
What Douglas, Home, and Howard said—
—For Howard was a generous foe—
And how the clan united pray'd
The Ladye would the feud forego,
And deign to bless the nuptial hour
Of Cranstoun's Lord and Teviot's Flower.

XXVI. She look'd to river, look'd to hill,
Thought on the Spirit's prophecy,

Then broke her silence stern and still,—
"Not you, but Fate, has vanquish'd me.
Their influence kindly stars may shower
On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
For pride is quell'd, and love is free."—
She took fair Margaret by the hand,
Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand,
That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she:—
"As I am true to thee and thine,
Do thou be true to me and mine!
This clasp of love our bond shall be;
For this is your betrothing day,
And all these noble lords shall stay,
To grace it with their company."—

XXVII. All as they left the listed plain,
Much of the story she did gain;
How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,
And of his page, and of the Book
Which from the wounded knight he took;
And how he sought her castle high,
That morn, by help of gramarye;
How, in Sir William's armour dight,
Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,
He took on him the single fight.
But half his tale he left unsaid,
And linger'd till he join'd the maid.—
Cared not the Ladye to betray
Her mystic arts in view of day;
But well she thought, ere midnight came,
Of that strange page the pride to tame,
From his foul hands the Book to save,
And send it back to Michael's grave.—
Needs not to tell each tender word
'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord;
Nor how she told of former woes,
And how her bosom fell and rose,
While he and Musgrave bandied blows.—
Needs not these lovers' joys to tell:
One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

XXVIII. William of Deloraine, some chance
Had waken'd from his death-like trance;
And taught that, in the listed plain,
Another, in his arms and shield,
Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,
Under the name of Deloraine.
Hence, to the field, unarm'd, he ran,
And hence his presence scared the clan,

Who held him for some fleeting wraith,
And not a man of blood and breath.
Not much this new ally he loved,
Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,
He greeted him right heartilie:
He would not waken old debate,
For he was void of rancorous hate,
Though rude, and scant of courtesy;
In raids he spilt but seldom blood,
Unless when men-at-arms withstood,
Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.
He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,
Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe:
And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,
When on dead Musgrave he look'd down;
Grief darken'd on his rugged brow,
Though half disguised with a frown;
And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
His foeman's epitaph he made.

XXIX. "Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here!
I ween, my deadly enemy;
For, if I slew thy brother dear,
Thou slew'st a sister's son to me;
And when I lay in dungeon dark,
Of Naworth Castle, long months three,
Till ransom'd for a thousand mark,
Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.
And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,
And thou wert now alive, as I,
No mortal man should us divide,
Till one, or both of us, did die:
Yet rest thee God! for well I know
I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.
In all the northern counties here,
Whose word is Snaffle, spur, and spear,
Thou wert the best to follow gear!
'Twas pleasure, as we look'd behind,
To see how thou the chase could'st wind,
Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray!
I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
Dark Musgrave were alive again."—

XXX. So mourn'd he, till Lord Dacre's band
Were bowning back to Cumberland.
They raised brave Musgrave from the field,
And laid him on his bloody shield;
On levell'd lances, four and four,

By turns, the noble burden bore.
Before, at times, upon the gale,
Was heard the Minstrel's plaintive wail;
Behind, four priests, in sable stole,
Sung requiem for the warrior's soul:
Around, the horsemen slowly rode;
With trailing pikes the spearmen trode;
And thus the gallant knight they bore,
Through Liddesdale to Leven's shore;
Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,
And laid him in his father's grave.

The harp's wild notes, though hush'd the song,
The mimic march of death prolong;
Now seems it far, and now a-near,
Now meets, and now eludes the ear;
Now seems some mountain side to sweep,
Now faintly dies in valley deep;
Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail,
Now the sad requiem, loads the gale;
Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
Rung the full choir in choral stave.

After due pause, they bade him tell,
Why he, who touch'd the harp so well,
Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
Wander a poor and thankless soil,
When the more generous Southern Land
Would well requite his skilful hand.

The Aged Harper, howsoe'er
His only friend, his harp, was dear,
Liked not to hear it rank'd so high
Above his flowing poesy:
Less liked he still, that scornful jeer
Misprised the land he loved so dear;
High was the sound, as thus again
The Bard resumed his minstrel strain.

CANTO SIXTH

1. Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;

For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

II. O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand!
Still, as I view each well-known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams were left;
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's streams still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my wither'd cheek;
Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The Bard may draw his parting groan.

III. Not scorn'd like me! to Branksome Hall
The Minstrels came, at festive call;
Trooping they came, from near and far,
The jovial priests of mirth and war;
Alike for feast and fight prepared,
Battle and banquet both they shared.
Of late, before each martial clan,
They blew their death-note in the van,
But now, for every merry mate,
Rose the portcullis' iron grate;
They sound the pipe, they strike the string,
They dance, they revel, and they sing,
Till the rude turrets shake and ring.

IV. Me lists not at this tide declare
The splendour of the spousal rite,
How muster'd in the chapel fair
Both maid and matron, squire and knight;

Me lists not tell of owches rare,
Of mantles green, and braided hair,
And kirtles furr'd with miniver;
What plumage waved the altar round,
How spurs and ringing chainlets sound;
And hard it were for bard to speak
The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek;
That lovely hue which comes and flies,
As awe and shame alternate rise!

v. Some bards have sung, the Ladye high
Chapel or altar came not nigh;
Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,
So much she fear'd each holy place.
False slanders these:—I trust right well
She wrought not by forbidden spell;
For mighty words and signs have power
O'er sprites in planetary hour:
Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,
Who tamper with such dangerous art.
But this for faithful truth I say,
The Ladye by the altar stood,
Of sable velvet her array,
And on her head a crimson hood,
With pearls embroider'd and entwined,
Guarded with gold, with ermine lined;
A merlin sat upon her wrist
Held by a leash of silken twist.

vi. The spousal rites were ended soon:
'Twas now the merry hour of noon,
And in the lofty arched hall
Was spread the gorgeous festival.
Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
Marshall'd the rank of every guest;
Pages, with ready blade, were there,
The mighty meal to carve and share:
O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
And princely peacock's gilded train,
And o'er the boar-head, garnish'd brave,
And cygnet from St. Mary's wave;
O'er ptarmigan and venison,
The priest had spoke his benison.
Then rose the riot and the din,
Above, beneath, without, within!
For, from the lofty balcony,
Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery:
Their clanging bowls old warriors quaff'd,
Loudly they spoke, and loudly laugh'd;

Whisper'd young knights, in tone more mild,
To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
The hooded hawks, high perch'd on beam,
The clamour join'd with whistling scream,
And flapp'd their wings, and shook their bells,
In concert with the stag-hounds' yells.
Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,
From Bourdeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine;
Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
And all is mirth and revelry.

VII. The Goblin Page, omitting still
No opportunity of ill,
Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
To rouse debate and jealousy;
Till Conrad, Lord of Wolfenstein,
By nature fierce, and warm with wine,
And now in humour highly cross'd,
About some steeds his band had lost,
High words to words succeeding still,
Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill;
A hot and hardy Rutherford,
Whom men called Dickon Draw-the-sword.
He took it on the page's saye,
Hunthill had driven these steeds away.
Then Howard, Home, and Douglas rose,
The kindling discord to compose:
Stern Rutherford right little said,
But bit his glove, and shook his head.—
A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
Stout Conrade, cold, and drench'd in blood,
His bosom gored with many a wound,
Was by a woodman's lyme-dog found;
Unknown the manner of his death,
Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath;
But ever from that time, 'twas said,
That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

VIII. The dwarf, who fear'd his master's eye
Might his foul treachery espie,
Now sought the castle buttery,
Where many a yeoman, bold and free,
Revell'd as merrily and well
As those that sat in lordly selle.
Watt Tinlinn, there, did frankly raise
The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-Braes;
And he, as by his breeding bound,
To Howard's merry-men sent it round.
To quit them, on the English side,

Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
"A deep carouse to yon fair bride!"—
At every pledge, from vat and pail,
Foam'd forth in floods the nut-brown ale;
While shout the riders every one;
Such day of mirth ne'er cheer'd their clan,
Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.

IX. The wily page, with vengeful thought,
Remember'd him of Tinlinn's yew,
And swore, it should be dearly bought
That ever he the arrow drew.
First, he the yeoman did molest,
With bitter gibe and taunting jest;
Told, how he fled at Solway strife,
And how Hob Armstrong cheer'd his wife;
Then, shunning still his powerful arm,
At unawares he wrought him harm;
From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
Dash'd from his lips his can of beer;
Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
With bodkin pierced him to the bone:
The venom'd wound, and festering joint,
Long after rued that bodkin's point.
The startled yeoman swore and spurn'd,
And board and flagons overturn'd.
Riot and clamour wild began;
Back to the hall the Urchin ran;
Took in a darkling nook his post,
And grinn'd, and mutter'd, "Lost! lost! lost!"

X. By this, the Dame, lest farther fray
Should mar the concord of the day,
Had bid the Minstrels tune their lay.
And first stept forth old Albert Græme,
The Minstrel of that ancient name:
Was none who struck the harp so well,
Within the Land Debateable;
Well friended, too, his hardy kin,
Whoever lost, were sure to win;
They sought the beeves that made their broth,
In Scotland and in England both.
In homely guise, as nature bade,
His simple song the Borderer said.

ALBERT GRÆME

XI. It was an English ladye bright,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)

And she would marry a Scottish knight,
For Love will still be lord of all.

Blithely they saw the rising sun,
When he shone fair on Carlisle wall;
But they were sad ere day was done,
Though Love was still the lord of all.

Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall;
Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
For ire that Love was lord of all.

For she had lands, both meadow and lea,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And he swore her death, ere he would see
A Scottish knight the lord of all!

XII. That wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
When dead, in her true love's arms, she fell,
For Love was still the lord of all!

He pierced her brother to the heart,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall:—
So perish all would true love part,
That Love may still be lord of all!

And then he took the cross divine,
(Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
And died for her sake in Palestine,
So Love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
Pray for their souls who died for love,
For Love shall still be lord of all!

XIII. As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port;
For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,
Renown'd in haughty Henry's court:
There rung thy harp, unrivall'd long,
Fitztraver of the silver song!
The gentle Surrey loved his lyre—
Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?
His was the hero's soul of fire,
And his the bard's immortal name,
And his was love, exalted high
By all the glow of chivalry.

xiv. They sought, together, climes afar,
And oft, within some olive grove,
When even came with twinkling star,
They sung of Surrey's absent love.
His step the Italian peasant stay'd,
And deem'd, that spirits from on high,
Round where some hermit saint was laid,
Were breathing heavenly melody;
So sweet did harp and voice combine,
To praise the name of Geraldine.

xv. Fitztraver! O what tongue may say
The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,
When Surrey, of the deathless lay,
Ungrateful Tudor's sentence slew?
Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
His harp call'd wrath and vengeance down.
He left, for Naworth's iron towers,
Windsor's green glades, and courtly bowers,
And faithful to his patron's name,
With Howard still Fitztraver came;
Lord William's foremost favourite he,
And chief of all his minstrelsy.

FITZTRAVER

xvi. 'Twas All-soul's eve, and Surrey's heart beat high;
He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,
Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
When wise Cornelius promised, by his art,
To show to him the ladye of his heart,
Albeit betwixt them roar'd the ocean grim;
Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,
That he should see her form in life and limb,
And mark, if still she loved, and still she thought
of him.

xvii. Dark was the vaulted room of gramarye,
To which the wizard led the gallant Knight,
Save that before a mirror, huge and high,
A hallow'd taper shed a glimmering light
On mystic implements of magic might;
On cross, and character, and talisman,
And almagest, and altar, nothing bright:
For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,
As watchlight by the bed of some departing man.

xviii. But soon, within that mirror huge and high,
Was seen a self-emitted light to gleam;

And forms upon its breast the Earl 'gan spy,
Cloudy and indistinct, as feverish dream;
Till, slow arranging, and defined, they seem
To form a lordly and a lofty room,
Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,
Placed by a couch of Agra's silken loom,
And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in gloom.

XIX. Fair all the pageant—but how passing fair
The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind!
O'er her white bosom stray'd her hazel hair,
Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined;
All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined,
And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine,
Some strain that seem'd her inmost soul to find:—
That favour'd strain was Surrey's raptured line,
That fair and lovely form, the Lady Geraldine.

XX. Slow roll'd the clouds upon the lovely form,
And swept the goodly vision all away—
So royal envy roll'd the murky storm
O'er my beloved Master's glorious day.
Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay
On thee, and on thy children's latest line,
The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,
The gory bridal bed, the plunder'd shrine,
The murder'd Surrey's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

XXI. Both Scots, and Southern chiefs, prolong
Applauses of Fitztraver's song;
These hated Henry's name as death,
And those still held the ancient faith.—
Then, from his seat, with lofty air,
Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair;
St. Clair, who, feasting high at Home,
Had with that lord to battle come.
Harold was born where restless seas
Howl round the storm-swept Orcades;
Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay;—
Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall!—
Thence oft he mark'd fierce Pentland rave,
As if grim Odin rode her wave;
And watch'd, the whilst, with visage pale,
And throbbing heart, the struggling sail;
For all of wonderful and wild
Had rapture for the lonely child.

xxii. And much of wild and wonderful
In these rude isles might fancy cull;
For thither came, in times afar,
Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war.
The Norsemen, train'd to spoil and blood,
Skill'd to prepare the raven's food;
Kings of the main their leaders brave,
Their barks the dragons of the wave.
And there, in many a stormy vale,
The Scald had told his wondrous tale;
And many a Runic column high
Had witness'd grim idolatry.
And thus had Harold, in his youth,
Learn'd many a Saga's rhyme uncouth,—
Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world;
Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell
Maddens the battle's bloody swell;
Of Chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold,
Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,
And bade the dead arise to arms!
With war and wonder all on flame,
To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
He learn'd a milder minstrelsy;
Yet something of the Northern spell
Mix'd with the softer numbers well.

HAROLD

xxiii. O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

—"Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

"The blackening wave is edged with white:
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round ladye gay;

Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch:
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"—

"'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."—

O'er Roslin all that dreary night,
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moon-beam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

xxiv. So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
Scarce mark'd the guests the darken'd hall,
Though, long before the sinking day,
A wondrous shade involved them all:
It was not eddying mist or fog,
Drain'd by the sun from fen or bog;
Of no eclipse had sages told;
And yet, as it came on apace,
Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
Could scarce his own stretch'd hand behold.
A secret horror check'd the feast,
And chill'd the soul of every guest;
Even the high Dame stood half aghast,
She knew some evil on the blast;
The elvish page fell to the ground,
And, shuddering, mutter'd, "Found! found! found!"

xxv. Then sudden, through the darken'd air
A flash of lightning came;
So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
The castle seem'd on flame.
Glanced every rafter of the hall,
Glanced every shield upon the wall;
Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone,
Were instant seen, and instant gone;
Full through the guests' bedazzled band
Resistless flash'd the levin-brand,
And fill'd the hall with smouldering smoke,
As on the elvish page it broke.
It broke with thunder long and loud,
Dismay'd the brave, appall'd the proud,—
From sea to sea the larum rung;
On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal,
To arms the startled warders sprung.
When ended was the dreadful roar,
The elvish dwarf was seen no more!

xxvi. Some heard a voice in Branksome Hall,
Some saw a sight, not seen by all;
That dreadful voice was heard by some,
Cry, with loud summons, "GYLBIN, COME!"
And on the spot where burst the brand,
Just where the page had flung him down,
Some saw an arm, and some a hand,
And some the waving of a gown.
The guests in silence pray'd and shook,
And terror dimm'd each lofty look.
But none of all the astonish'd train

Was so dismay'd as Deloraine;
His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,
'Twas fear'd his mind would ne'er return;
For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
Like him of whom the story ran,
Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.
At length, by fits, he darkly told,
With broken hint, and shuddering cold—
That he had seen, right certainly,
A shape with amice wrapp'd around,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like pilgrim from beyond the sea;
And knew—but how it matter'd not—
It was the wizard, Michael Scott.

XXVII. The anxious crowd, with horror pale,
All trembling heard the wondrous tale;
No sound was made, no word was spoke,
Till noble Angus silence broke;
And he a solemn sacred plight
Did to St. Bride of Douglas make,
That he a pilgrimage would take
To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
Of Michael's restless sprite.
Then each, to ease his troubled breast,
To some bless'd saint his prayers address'd:
Some to St. Modan made their vows,
Some to St. Mary of the Lowes,
Some to the Holy Rood of Lisle,
Some to our Ladye of the Isle;
Each did his patron witness make,
That he such pilgrimage would take,
And monks should sing, and bells should toll,
All for the weal of Michael's soul.
While vows were ta'en, and prayers were pray'd,
'Tis said the noble dame, dismay'd,
Renounced, for aye, dark magic's aid.

XXVIII. Nought of the bridal will I tell,
Which after in short space befell;
Nor how brave sons and daughters fair
Bless'd Teviot's Flower, and Cranstoun's heir:
After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain
To wake the note of mirth again.
More meet it were to mark the day
Of penitence and prayer divine,
When pilgrim-chiefs, in sad array,
Sought Melrose' holy shrine.

xxix. With naked foot, and sackcloth vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Did every pilgrim go;
The standers-by might hear uneath,
Footstep, or voice, or high-drawn breath,
Through all the lengthen'd row:
No lordly look, nor martial stride,
Gone was their glory, sunk their pride,
Forgotten their renown;
Silent and slow, like ghosts they glide
To the high altar's hallow'd side,
And there they knelt them down:
Above the suppliant chieftains wave
The banners of departed brave;
Beneath the letter'd stones were laid
The ashes of their fathers dead;
From many a garnish'd niche around,
Stern saints and tortured martyrs frown'd.

xxx. And slow up the dim aisle afar,
With sable cowl and scapular,
And snow-white stoles, in order due,
The holy Fathers, two and two,
In long procession came;
Taper and host, and book they bare,
And holy banner, flourish'd fair
With the Redeemer's name.
Above the prostrate pilgrim band
The mitred Abbot stretch'd his hand,
And bless'd them as they kneel'd;
With holy cross he sign'd them all,
And pray'd they might be sage in hall,
And fortunate in field.
Then mass was sung, and prayers were said,
And solemn requiem for the dead;
And bells toll'd out their mighty peal,
For the departed spirit's weal;
And ever in the office close
The hymn of intercession rose;
And far the echoing aisles prolong
The awful burthen of the song,—
DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA;
While the pealing organ rung;
Were it meet with sacred strain
To close my lay, so light and vain,
Thus the holy Fathers sung.

HYMN FOR THE DEAD

XXXI. That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?

When, shrivelling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll;
When louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead!

Oh! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!

Hush'd is the harp—the Minstrel gone.
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No; close beneath proud Newark's tower,
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower;
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden hedged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
There shelter'd wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begg'd before.
So pass'd the winter's day; but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath;
When throstles sung in Harehead-shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.

MARMION[1]

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD

The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character; but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the Author was, if possible, to apprise his readers, at the outset, of the date of his story, and to prepare them for the manners of the age in which it is laid. Any Historical Narrative, far more an attempt at Epic composition, exceeded his plan of a Romantic Tale; yet he may be permitted to hope, from the popularity of THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the Public.

The Poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September 1513.

ASHESTIEL, 1808.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST

TO WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear:
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trill'd the streamlet through:
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with doubled speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,

[1] Dedication: To the Right Honourable Henry Lord Montagu, this Romance is inscribed by the Author. [Lord Montagu was the second son of Henry Duke of Buccleuch, by the only daughter of John last Duke of Montagu.]

Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam;
Away hath pass'd the heather-bell
That bloom'd so rich on Needpath-fell;
Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To shelter'd dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines:
In meek despondency they eye
The wither'd sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill:
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,
And wraps him closer from the cold;
His dogs, no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower;
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round,
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But oh! my country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise;
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand that grasp'd the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows

Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er NELSON's shrine;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
That shrouds, O PITT, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart!
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave;
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given.
Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd,—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar;
Who, born to guide such high emprize,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,
The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm, to aid the freeman's laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripp'd of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne:
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!

Oh think, how to his latest day,
When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,
With Palinure's unalter'd mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;
Each call for needful rest repell'd,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains,
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallow'd day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, PITT, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh;
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employ'd, and wanted most;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below:
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppress'd,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke agen,
"All peace on earth, good-will to men;"
If ever from an English heart,
O, *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Briton died!
When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave,

Was barter'd by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,
The sullied olive-branch return'd,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nail'd her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honour'd grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endow'd,
How high they soar'd above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Look'd up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of PITT and FOX alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees.
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tomb'd beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!—
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,—
"Here let their discord with them die.
Speak not for those a separate doom,
Whom Fate made Brothers in the tomb;
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like agen?"

Rest, ardent Spirits! till the cries
Of dying Nature bid you rise;
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse;
Then, O, how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain!
Though not unmark'd from northern clime,
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:

His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;
The Bard you deign'd to praise, your deathless
names has sung.

Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,
My wilder'd fancy still beguile!
From this high theme how can I part,
Ere half unloaded is my heart!
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
And all the raptures fancy knew,
And all the keener rush of blood,
That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,
Were here a tribute mean and low,
Though all their mingled streams could flow—
Woe, wonder, and sensation high,
In one spring-tide of ecstasy!—
It will not be—it may not last—
The vision of enchantment's past:
Like frostwork in the morning ray,
The fancied fabric melts away;
Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,
And long, dim, lofty aisle, are gone;
And, lingering last, deception dear,
The choir's high sounds die on my ear.
Now slow return the lonely down,
The silent pastures bleak and brown,
The farm begirt with copsewood wild,
The gambols of each frolic child,
Mixing their shrill cries with the tone
Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
Thus Nature disciplines her son:
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
And waste the solitary day,
In plucking from yon fen the reed,
And watch it floating down the Tweed;
Or idly list the shrilling lay,
With which the milkmaid cheers her way,
Marking its cadence rise and fail,
As from the field, beneath her pail,
She trips it down the uneven dale:
Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
The ancient shepherd's tale to learn;
Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
Lest his old legends tire the ear
Of one, who, in his simple mind,
May boast of book-learn'd taste refined.

But thou, my friend, can'st fitly tell,
(For few have read romance so well,)
How still the legendary lay
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway;
How on the ancient minstrel strain
Time lays his palsied hand in vain;
And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
Still throb for fear and pity's sake;
As when the Champion of the Lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse;
Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to move,
(Alas, that lawless was their love!)
He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
And freed full sixty knights; or when,
A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.

The mightiest chiefs of British song
Scorn'd not such legends to prolong:
They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme;
And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again,
But that a ribald King and Court
Bade him toil on, to make them sport;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious satire, song, and play;
The world defrauded of the high design,
Profaned the God-given strength, and marr'd the lofty line.

Warm'd by such names, well may we then,
Though dwindled sons of little men,
Essay to break a feeble lance
In the fair fields of old romance;
Or seek the moated castle's cell,
Where long through talisman and spell,
While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,
Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept:
There sound the harpings of the North,
Till he awake and sally forth,
On venturous quest to prick again,

In all his arms, with all his train,
Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
And wizard with his wand of might,
And errant maid on palfrey white.
Around the Genius weave their spells,
Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells;
Mystery, half veil'd and half reveal'd;
And Honour, with his spotless shield;
Attention, with fix'd eye; and Fear,
That loves the tale she shrinks to hear;
And gentle Courtesy; and Faith,
Unchang'd by sufferings, time, or death;
And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword.

Well has thy fair achievement shown,
A worthy meed may thus be won;
Ytene's oaks—beneath whose shade
Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,
And that Red King, who, while of old,
Through Boldrewood the chase he led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled—
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renew'd such legendary strain;
For thou hast sung, how He of Gaul,
That Amadis so famed in hall,
For Oriana, foil'd in fight
The Necromancer's felon might;
And well in modern verse hast wove
Partenopex's mystic love:
Hear, then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

CANTO FIRST

THE CASTLE

1. Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone:
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates, where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,

Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seem'd forms of giant height:
Their armour, as it caught the rays,
Flash'd back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.

II. Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray
Less bright, and less, was flung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the Donjon Tower,
So heavily it hung.
The scouts had parted on their search,
The Castle gates were barr'd;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The Warder kept his guard;
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border gathering song.

III. A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill a plump of spears,
Beneath a pennon gay;
A horseman, darting from the crowd,
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
Before the dark array.
Beneath the sable palisade,
That closed the Castle barricade,
His bugle horn he blew;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warn'd the Captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call,
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

IV. "Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow;
And, from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot;
Lord MARMION waits below!"
Then to the Castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,

Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparr'd
And let the drawbridge fall.

v. Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,
His helm hung at the saddlebow;
Well by his visage you might know
He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
And had in many a battle been;
The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd
A token true of Bosworth field;
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire;
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
His thick mustache, and curly hair,
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
But more through toil than age;
His square-turn'd joints, and strength of limb,
Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,
But in close fight a champion grim,
In camps a leader sage.

vi. Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel,
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd;
Amid the plumage of the crest,
A falcon hover'd on her nest,
With wings outspread, and forward breast;
E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soar'd sable in an azure field:
The golden legend bore aright,
WHO CHECKS AT ME, TO DEATH IS DIGHT.
Blue was the charger's broider'd rein;
Blue ribbons deck'd his arching mane;
The knightly housing's ample fold
Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.

vii. Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name, and knightly sires;
They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim;
For well could each a war-horse tame,
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
And lightly bear the ring away;
Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,

And frame love-ditties passing rare,
And sing them to a lady fair.

VIII. Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe:
They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,
And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at need
Him listed ease his battle-steed.
The last and trustiest of the four,
On high his forky pennon bore;
Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,
Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,
Where, blazon'd sable, as before,
The towering falcon seem'd to soar.
Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,
In hosen black, and jerkins blue,
With falcons broider'd on each breast,
Attended on their lord's behest.
Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;
Each one a six-foot bow could bend,
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send;
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung.
Their dusty palfreys, and array,
Show'd they had march'd a weary way.

IX. 'Tis meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly arm'd, and order'd how,
The soldiers of the guard,
With musket, pike, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
Stood in the Castle-yard;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,
For welcome-shot prepared:
Enter'd the train, and such a clang,
As then through all his turrets rang,
Old Norham never heard.

X. The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
The trumpets flourish'd brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
And thundering welcome gave.
A blithe salute, in martial sort,
The minstrels well might sound,
For, as Lord Marmion cross'd the court,
He scatter'd angels round.

"Welcome to Norham, Marmion!
Stout heart, and open hand!
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
Thou flower of English land!"

XI. Two pursuivants, whom tabarts deck,
With silver scutcheon round their neck,
Stood on the steps of stone,
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,
They hail'd Lord Marmion:
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town;
And he, their courtesy to requite,
Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight,
All as he lighted down.
"Now, largesse, largesse, Lord Marmion,
Knight of the crest of gold!
A blazon'd shield, in battle won,
Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

XII. They marshall'd him to the Castle-hall,
Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourish'd the trumpet-call,
And heralds loudly cried,
—"Room, lordings, room for Lord Marmion,
With the crest and helm of gold!
Full well we know the trophies won
In the lists at Cottiswold:
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;
To him he lost his lady-love,
And to the King his land.
Ourselves beheld the listed field,
A sight both sad and fair;
We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,
And saw his saddle bare;
We saw the victor win the crest
He wears with worthy pride;
And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,
His foeman's scutcheon tied.
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight!
Room, room, ye gentles gay,
For him who conquer'd in the right,
Marmion of Fontenaye!"

XIII. Then stepp'd to meet that noble Lord,
Sir Hugh the Heron bold,

Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And Captain of the Hold.
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper place—
They feasted full and high:
The whiles a Northern harper rude
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
"How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all,
Stout Willimondswick,
And Hardriding Dick,
And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o' the Wall,
Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
And taken his life at the Deadman's-shaw."
Scantily Lord Marmion's ear could brook
The harper's barbarous lay;
Yet much he praised the pains he took,
And well those pains did pay:
For lady's suit, and minstrel's strain,
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

XIV. "Now, good Lord Marmion," Heron says,
"Of your fair courtesy,
I pray you bide some little space
In this poor tower with me.
Here may you keep your arms from rust,
May breathe your war-horse well;
Seldom hath pass'd a week but giust
Or feat of arms befell:
The Scots can rein a mettled steed;
And love to couch a spear;—
Saint George! a stirring life they lead,
That have such neighbours near.
Then stay with us a little space,
Our northern wars to learn;
I pray you, for your lady's grace!"
Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

XV. The Captain mark'd his alter'd look,
And gave a squire the sign;
A mighty wassail-bowl he took,
And crown'd it high in wine.
"Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion:
But first I pray thee fair,
Where hast thou left that page of thine,
That used to serve thy cup of wine,
Whose beauty was so rare?
When last in Raby towers we met,
The boy I closely eyed,

And often mark'd his cheeks were wet,
With tears he fain would hide:
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
To burnish shield or sharpen brand,
Or saddle battle-steed;
But meeter seem'd for lady fair,
To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
The slender silk to lead:
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
His bosom—when he sigh'd,
The russet doublet's rugged fold
Could scarce repel its pride!
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
To serve in lady's bower?
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
A gentle paramour?"

XVI. Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;
He roll'd his kindling eye,
With pain his rising wrath suppress'd,
Yet made a calm reply:
"That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,
He might not brook the northern air.
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
I left him sick in Lindisfarn:
Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,
Why does thy lovely lady gay
Disdain to grace the hall to-day?
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
Gone on some pious pilgrimage?"—
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
Whisper'd light tales of Heron's dame.

XVII. Unmark'd, at least unreck'd, the taunt,
Careless the Knight replied,
"No bird, whose feathers gaily flaunt,
Delights in cage to bide:
Norham is grim and grated close,
Hemm'd in by battlement and fosse,
And many a darksome tower;
And better loves my lady bright
To sit in liberty and light,
In fair Queen Margaret's bower.
We hold our greyhound in our hand,
Our falcon on our glove;
But where shall we find leash or band,
For dame that loves to rove?
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
She'll stoop when she has tired her wing."—

XVIII. "Nay, if with Royal James's bride
The lovely Lady Heron bide,
Behold me here a messenger,
Your tender greetings prompt to bear;
For, to the Scottish court address'd,
I journey at our King's behest,
And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me, and mine, a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James back'd the cause of that mock prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power,
What time we razed old Ayton's tower,"—

XIX. "For such-like need, my lord, I trow,
Norham can find you guides enow;
For here be some have prick'd as far,
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar;
Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods."—

XX. "Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,
"Were I in warlike wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack,
Than your stout forayers at my back;
But, as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why through all Scotland, near and far,
Their King is mustering troops for war,
The sight of plundering Border spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,
Break out in some unseemly broil:
A herald were my fitting guide;
Or frair, sworn in peace to bide;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

XXI. The Captain mused a little space,
And pass'd his hand across his face.
—"Fain would I find the guide you want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant,
The only men that safe can ride
Mine errands on the Scottish side:
And though a bishop built this fort,
Few holy brethren here resort;

Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
Since our last siege, we have not seen:
The mass he might not sing or say,
Upon one stinted meal a-day;
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
And pray'd for our success the while.
Our Norham vicar, woe betide,
Is all too well in case to ride;
The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train;
But then, no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man:
A blithesome brother at the can,
A welcome guest in hall and bower,
He knows each castle, town, and tower,
In which the wine and ale is good,
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,
In evil hour, he cross'd the Tweed,
To teach Dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
That, if again he venture o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no more.
Little he loves such risks, I know;
Yet, in your guard, perchance will go."

XXII. Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle and that lord,
And reverently took up the word.
"Kind uncle, woe were we each one,
If harm should hap to brother John.
He is a man of mirthful speech,
Can many a game and gambol teach:
Full well at tables can he play,
And sweep at bowls the stake away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the hall,
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
And we can neither hunt, nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vow'd revenge of Bughtrig rude,
May end in worse than loss of hood.

Let Friar John, in safety, still
In chimney-corner snore his fill,
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill:
Last night, to Norham there came one,
Will better guide Lord Marmion."—
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say."—

XXIII. "Here is a holy Palmer come,
From Salem first, and last from Rome;
One, that hath kiss'd the blessed tomb,
And visited each holy shrine,
In Araby and Palestine;
On hills of Armenie hath been,
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
Which parted at the prophet's rod;
In Sinai's wilderness he saw
The Mount, where Israel heard the law,
'Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;
And of that Grot where Olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.

XXIV. "To stout Saint George of Norwich merry,
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,
For his sins' pardon hath he pray'd.
He knows the passes of the North,
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;
Little he eats, and long will wake,
And drinks but of the stream or lake.
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;
But, when our John hath quaff'd his ale,
As little as the wind that blows,
And warms itself against his nose,
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."—

XXV. "Gramercy!" quoth Lord Marmion,
"Full loth were I, that Friar John,
That venerable man, for me,
Were placed in fear or jeopardy.
If this same Palmer will me lead
From hence to Holy-Rood,
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,

Instead of cockle-shell, or bead,
With angels fair and good.
I love such holy ramblers; still
They know to charm a weary hill,
With song, romance, or lay:
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend, at the least,
They bring to cheer the way."—

XXVI. "Ah! noble sir," young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
"This man knows much, perchance e'en more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.
Last night we listen'd at his cell;
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,
He murmur'd on till morn, howe'er
No living mortal could be near.
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
As other voices spoke again.
I cannot tell—I like it not—
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
No conscience clear, and void of wrong,
Can rest awake, and pray so long.
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have mark'd ten aves, and two creeds."—

XXVII. —"Let pass," quoth Marmion; "by my fay,
This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch-fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company.
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This Palmer to the Castle-hall."
The summon'd Palmer came in place;
His sable cowl o'erhung his face;
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought;
The scallop shell his cap did deck;
The crucifix around his neck
Was from Loretto brought;
His sandals were with travel tore,
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore;
The faded palm-branch in his hand
Show'd pilgrim from the Holy Land.

XXVIII. When as the Palmer came in hall,
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,

Or had a statelier step withal,
Or look'd more high and keen;
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
As he his peer had been.
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil;
His cheek was sunk, alas the while!
And when he struggled at a smile,
His eye look'd haggard wild:
Poor wretch! the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan face, and sun-burn'd hair,
She had not known her child.
Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
Soon change the form that best we know—
For deadly fear can time outgo,
And blanch at once the hair;
Hard toil can roughen form and face,
And want can quench the eye's bright grace,
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
More deeply than despair.
Happy whom none of these befall,
But this poor Palmer knew them all.

XXIX. Lord Marmion then his boon did ask;
The Palmer took on him the task,
So he would march with morning tide,
To Scottish court to be his guide.
"But I have solemn vows to pay,
And may not linger by the way,
To fair St. Andrews bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound;
Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore:
Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring
Could back to peace my bosom bring,
Or bid it throb no more!"

XXX. And now the midnight draught of sleep,
Where wine and spices richly steep,
In massive bowl of silver deep,
The page presents on knee.
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
The Captain pledged his noble guest,

The cup went through among the rest,
Who drain'd it merrily;
Alone the Palmer pass'd it by,
Though Selby press'd him courteously.
This was a sign the feast was o'er;
It hush'd the merry wassel roar,
The minstrels ceased to sound.
Soon in the castle nought was heard,
But the slow footstep of the guard,
Pacing his sober round.

XXXI. With early dawn Lord Marmion rose:
And first the chapel doors unclose;
Then, after morning rites were done,
(A hasty mass from Friar John,)
And knight and squire had broke their fast,
On rich substantial repast,
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse:
Then came the stirrup-cup in course:
Between the Baron and his host,
No point of courtesy was lost;
High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
Solemn excuse the Captain made,
Till, filing from the gate, had pass'd
That noble train, their Lord the last.
Then loudly rung the trumpet call;
Thunder'd the cannon from the wall,
And shook the Scottish shore;
Around the castle eddied slow,
Volumes of smoke as white as snow,
And hid its turrets hoar;
Till they roll'd forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect fair.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND

TO THE REV. JOHN MARRIOTT, A.M.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair,
When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind.
Yon Thorn—perchance whose prickly spears
Have fenced him for three hundred years,
While fell around his green compeers—

Yon lonely Thorn, would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough;
Would he could tell how deep the shade
A thousand mingled branches made;
How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan [1] to the rock,
And through the foliage show'd his head,
With narrow leaves and berries red;
What pines on every mountain sprung,
O'er every dell what birches hung,
In every breeze what aspens shook,
What alders shaded every brook!

"Here, in my shade," methinks he'd say,
"The mighty stag at noon-tide lay:
The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,
(The neighbouring dingle bears his name,)
With lurching step around me prowl,
And stop, against the moon to howl;
The mountain-boar, on battle set,
His tusks upon my stem would whet;
While doe, and roe, and red-deer good,
Have bounded by, through gay green-wood.
Then oft, from Newark's riven tower,
Sallied a Scottish monarch's power:
A thousand vassals muster'd round,
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;
And I might see the youth intent,
Guard every pass with crossbow bent;
And through the brake the rangers stalk,
And falc'ners hold the ready hawk;
And foresters, in green-wood trim,
Lead in the leash the gazehounds grim,
Attentive, as the bratchet's [2] bay
From the dark covert drove the prey,
To slip them as he broke away.
The startled quarry bounds amain,
As fast the gallant greyhounds strain;
Whistles the arrow from the bow,
Answers the harquebuss below;
While all the rocking hills reply,
To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry,
And bugles ringing lightsomely."

Of such proud huntings, many tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,

[1] Mountain-ash. [2] Slowhound.

Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow,
Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.
But not more blithe that silvan court,
Than we have been at humbler sport;
Though small our pomp, and mean our game,
Our mirth, dear Marriott, was the same.
Remember'st thou my greyhounds true?
O'er holt or hill there never flew,
From slip or leash there never sprang,
More fleet of foot, or sure of fang.
Nor dull, between each merry chase,
Pass'd by the intermitted space;
For we had fair resource in store,
In Classic and in Gothic lore:
We mark'd each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now—for now are still
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill!
No longer, from thy mountains dun,
The yeoman hears the well-known gun,
And while his honest heart glows warm,
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, "The Chieftain of the Hills!"
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,
Trip o'er the walks, or tend the flowers,
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw
By moonlight dance on Carterhaugh;
No youthful Baron's left to grace
The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chase,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon:
And she is gone, whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace;
Though if to Sylphid Queen 'twere given,
To show our earth the charms of Heaven,
She could not glide along the air,
With form more light, or face more fair.
No more the widow's deafen'd ear
Grows quick that lady's step to hear:
At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot;
Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
Or pensive cooks her orphans' meal;
Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
The gentle hand by which they're fed.

From Yair,—which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
Till all his eddying currents boil,—
Her long-descended lord is gone,
And left us by the stream alone.
And much I miss those sportive boys,
Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
When thought is speech, and speech is truth.
Close to my side, with what delight
They press'd to hear of Wallace wight,
When, pointing to his airy mound,
I call'd his ramparts holy ground!
Kindled their brows to hear me speak;
And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,
Despite the difference of our years,
Return again the glow of theirs.
Ah, happy boys! such feelings pure,
They will not, cannot, long endure;
Condemn'd to stem the world's rude tide,
You may not linger by the side;
For Fate shall thrust you from the shore,
And Passion ply the sail and oar.
Yet cherish the remembrance still,
Of the lone mountain, and the rill;
For trust, dear boys, the time will come,
When fiercer transport shall be dumb,
And you will think right frequently,
But, well I hope, without a sigh,
On the free hours that we have spent
Together, on the brown hill's bent.

When, musing on companions gone,
We doubly feel ourselves alone,
Something, my friend, we yet may gain;
There is a pleasure in this pain:
It soothes the love of lonely rest,
Deep in each gentler heart impress'd.
'Tis silent amid worldly toils,
And stifled soon by mental broils;
But, in a bosom thus prepared,
Its still small voice is often heard,
Whispering a mingled sentiment,
'Twixt resignation and content.
Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
By lone Saint Mary's silent lake;
Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge;

Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink;
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.
Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view;
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake, is there,
Save where, of land, yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.
Yet even this nakedness has power,
And aids the feeling of the hour:
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
Where living thing conceal'd might lie;
Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,
Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell;
There's nothing left to fancy's guess,
You see that all is loneliness:
And silence aids—though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills;
In summer tide, so soft they weep,
The sound but lulls the ear asleep;
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.

Nought living meets the eye or ear,
But well I ween the dead are near;
For though, in feudal strife, a foe
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,
Yet still, beneath the hallow'd soil,
The peasant rests him from his toil,
And, dying, bids his bones be laid,
Where erst his simple fathers pray'd.

If age had tamed the passions' strife,
And fate had cut my ties to life,
Here, have I thought, 'twere sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage,
Where Milton long'd to spend his age.
'Twere sweet to mark the setting day,
On Bourhope's lonely top decay;
And, as it faint and feeble died
On the broad lake, and mountain's side,
To say, "Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey;"
Then gaze on Dryhope's ruin'd tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded Flower:

And when that mountain-sound I heard,
Which bids us be for storm prepared,
The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the Tempest brings,
'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,
To sit upon the Wizard's grave;
That Wizard Priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust;
On which no sunbeam ever shines—
(So superstition's creed divines)—
Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,
Heave her broad billows to the shore;
And mark the wild-swans mount the gale,
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave:
Then, when against the driving hail
No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp, and trim my fire;
There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had all its sway,
And, in the bittern's distant shriek,
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the Wizard Priest was come,
To claim again his ancient home!
And bade my busy fancy range,
To frame him fitting shape and strange,
Till from the task my brow I clear'd,
And smiled to think that I had fear'd.

But chief, 'twere sweet to think such life,
(Though but escape from fortune's strife,)
Something most matchless good and wise,
A great and grateful sacrifice;
And deem each hour to musing given,
A step upon the road to heaven.

Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease,
Such peaceful solitudes displease:
He loves to drown his bosom's jar
Amid the elemental war:
And my black Palmer's choice had been
Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene.
There eagles scream from isle to shore;
Down all the rocks the torrents roar;
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven;

Through the rude barriers of the lake,
Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream below,
Diving, as if condemn'd to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prison'd by enchanter's spell,
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.
And well that Palmer's form and mien
Had suited with the stormy scene,
Just on the edge, straining his ken
To view the bottom of the den,
Where, deep deep down, and far within,
Toils with the rocks the roaring linn;
Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.

Marriott, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has rung:
Then list to me, and thou shalt know
Of this mysterious Man of Woe.

CANTO SECOND

THE CONVENT

1. The breeze, which swept away the smoke,
Round Norham Castle roll'd,
When all the loud artillery spoke,
With lightning-flash, and thunder-stroke,
As Marmion left the Hold.
It curl'd not Tweed alone, that breeze,
For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
It freshly blew, and strong,
Where, from high Whitby's cloister'd pile,
Bound to St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle,
It bore a bark along.
Upon the gale she stoop'd her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing home;
The merry seamen laugh'd, to see
Their gallant ship so lustily
Furrow the green sea-foam.
Much joy'd they in their honour'd freight;

For, on the deck, in chair of state,
The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

II. 'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,
Like birds escaped to green-wood shades,
Their first flight from the cage,
How timid, and how curious too,
For all to them was strange and new,
And all the common sights they view,
Their wonderment engage.
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
With many a benedicite;
One at the rippling surge grew pale,
And would for terror pray;
Then shriek'd, because the sea-dog, nigh,
His round black head, and sparkling eye,
Rear'd o'er the foaming spray;
And one would still adjust her veil,
Disorder'd by the summer gale,
Perchance lest some more worldly eye
Her dedicated charms might spy;
Perchance, because such action graced
Her fair-turn'd arm and slender waist.
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure share,—
The Abbess, and the Novice Clare.

III. The Abbess was of noble blood,
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook.
Fair too she was, and kind had been
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
For her a timid lover sigh,
Nor knew the influence of her eye.
Love, to her ear, was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame;
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
Bounded within the cloister wall:
The deadliest sin her mind could reach,
Was of monastic rule the breach;
And her ambition's highest aim
To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.
For this she gave her ample dower,
To raise the convent's eastern tower;
For this, with carving rare and quaint,
She deck'd the chapel of the saint,
And gave the relic-shrine of cost,

With ivory and gems emboss'd.
The poor her Convent's bounty blest,
The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV. Black was her garb, her rigid rule
Reform'd on Benedictine school;
Her cheek was pale, her form was spare;
Vigils, and penitence austere,
Had early quench'd the light of youth,
But gentle was the dame, in sooth;
Though vain of her religious sway,
She loved to see her maids obey,
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
And the nuns loved their Abbess well.
Sad was this voyage to the dame;
Summon'd to Lindisfarne, she came,
There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old,
And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold
A chapter of Saint Benedict,
For inquisition stern and strict,
On two apostates from the faith,
And, if need were, to doom to death.

V. Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and fair;
As yet a novice unprofess'd,
Lovely and gentle, but distress'd.
She was betroth'd to one now dead,
Or worse, who had dishonour'd fled.
Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
To one, who loved her for her land:
Herself, almost heart-broken now,
Was bent to take the vestal vow,
And shroud, within Saint Hilda's gloom,
Her blasted hopes and wither'd bloom.

VI. She sate upon the galley's prow,
And seem'd to mark the waves below;
Nay, seem'd, so fix'd her look and eye,
To count them as they glided by.
She saw them not—'twas seeming all—
Far other scene her thoughts recall,—
A sun-scorch'd desert, waste and bare,
Nor waves, nor breezes, murmur'd there;
There saw she, where some careless hand
O'er a dead corpse had heap'd the sand,
To hide it till the jackals come,
To tear it from the scanty tomb.——
See what a woful look was given,
As she raised up her eyes to heaven!

VII. Lovely, and gentle, and distress'd—
These charms might tame the fiercest breast:
Harpers have sung, and poets told,
That he, in fury uncontroll'd,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood.
But passions in the human frame,
Oft put the lion's rage to shame:
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sordid avarice in league,
Had practised with their bowl and knife,
Against the mourner's harmless life.
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay
Prison'd in Cuthbert's islet grey.

VIII. And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland;
Towns, towers, and halls, successive rise,
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
They mark'd, amid her trees, the hall
Of lofty Seaton-Delaval;
They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck floods
Rush to the sea through sounding woods;
They pass'd the tower of Widderington,
Mother of many a valiant son;
At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
To the good Saint who own'd the cell;
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
And next, they cross'd themselves, to hear
The whitening breakers sound so near,
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar,
On Dunstanborough's cavern'd shore;
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they there,
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reach'd the Holy Island's bay.

IX. The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the Saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,

The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day, the waves efface
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The Castle with its battled walls,
The ancient Monastery's halls,
A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.

x. In Saxon strength that Abbey frown'd,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley'd walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Show'd where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And moulder'd in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower;
Yet still entire the Abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

xi. Soon as they near'd his turrets strong,
The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,
And with the sea-wave and the wind,
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
And made harmonious close;
Then, answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drown'd amid the breakers' roar,
According chorus rose:
Down to the haven of the Isle,
The monks and nuns in order file,
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim;
Banner, and cross, and relics there,

To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare;
And, as they caught the sounds on air,
They echoed back the hymn.
The islanders, in joyous mood,
Rush'd emulously through the flood,
To hale the bark to land;
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,
And bless'd them with her hand.

XII. Suppose we now the welcome said,
Suppose the Convent banquet made:
All through the holy dome,
Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
Wherever vestal maid might pry,
Nor risk to meet unhallow'd eye,
The stranger sisters roam:
Till fell the evening damp with dew,
And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
For there, even summer night is chill.
Then, having stray'd and gazed their fill,
They closed around the fire;
And all, in turn, essay'd to paint
The rival merits of their saint,
A theme that ne'er can tire
A holy maid; for, be it known,
That their saint's honour is their own.

XIII. Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
How to their house three Barons bold
Must menial service do;
While horns blow out a note of shame,
And monks cry "Fye upon your name!
In wrath, for loss of silvan game,
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."—
"This, on Ascension-day, each year,
While labouring on our harbour-pier,
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."—
They told, how in their convent-cell
A Saxon princess once did dwell,
The lovely Edelfled;
And how, of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda pray'd;
Themselves, within their holy bound,
Their stony folds had often found.
They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail,
And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,
They do their homage to the saint.

XIV. Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail,
To vie with these in holy tale;
His body's resting-place, of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told;
How, when the rude Dane burn'd their pile,
The monks fled forth from Holy Isle;
O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore.
They rested them in fair Melrose;
But though, alive, he loved it well,
Not there his relics might repose;
For, wondrous tale to tell!
In his stone-coffin forth he rides,
A ponderous bark for river tides,
Yet light as gossamer it glides,
Downward to Tilmouth cell.
Nor long was his abiding there,
For southward did the saint repair;
Chester-le-Street, and Rippon, saw
His holy corpse, ere Wardilaw
Hail'd him with joy and fear;
And, after many wanderings past,
He chose his lordly seat at last,
Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
Looks down upon the Wear:
There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
His relics are in secret laid;
But none may know the place,
Save of his holiest servants three,
Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
Who share that wondrous grace.

XV. Who may his miracles declare!
Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir,
(Although with them they led
Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
And Lodon's knights, all sheathed in mail,
And the bold men of Teviotdale,)
Before his standard fled.
'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
And turn'd the Conqueror back again,
When, with his Norman bowyer band,
He came to waste Northumberland.

XVI. But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn
If, on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame

The sea-born beads that bear his name:
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
And said they might his shape behold,
And hear his anvil sound;
A deaden'd clang,—a huge dim form,
Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm
And night were closing round.
But this, as tale of idle fame,
The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

XVII. While round the fire such legends go,
Far different was the scene of woe,
Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
Council was held of life and death.
It was more dark and lone that vault,
Than the worst dungeon cell:
Old Colwulf built it, for his fault,
In penitence to dwell,
When he, for cowl and beads, laid down
The Saxon battle-axe and crown.
This den, which, chilling every sense
Of feeling, hearing, sight,
Was call'd the Vault of Penitence,
Excluding air and light,
Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made
A place of burial for such dead,
As, having died in mortal sin,
Might not be laid the church within.
'Twas now a place of punishment;
Whence if so loud a shriek were sent,
As reach'd the upper air,
The hearers bless'd themselves, and said,
The spirits of the sinful dead
Bemoan'd their torments there.

XVIII. But though, in the monastic pile,
Did of this penitential aisle
Some vague tradition go,
Few only, save the Abbot, knew
Where the place lay; and still more few
Were those, who had from him the clew
To that dread vault to go.
Victim and executioner
Were blindfold when transported there.
In low dark rounds the arches hung,
From the rude rock the side-walls sprung;
The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o'er,
Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
Were all the pavement of the floor;

The mildew-drops fell one by one,
With tinkling plash, upon the stone.
A cresset, in an iron chain,
Which served to light this drear domain,
With damp and darkness seem'd to strive,
As if it scarce might keep alive;
And yet it dimly served to show
The awful conclave met below.

XIX. There, met to doom in secrecy,
Were placed the heads of convents three:
All servants of Saint Benedict,
The statutes of whose order strict
On iron table lay;
In long black dress, on seats of stone,
Behind were these three judges shown
By the pale cresset's ray:
The Abbess of Saint Hilda's, there,
Sat for a space with visage bare,
Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And tear-drops that for pity fell,
She closely drew her veil:
Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing dress,
Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,
And she with awe looks pale:
And he, that Ancient Man, whose sight
Has long been quench'd by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,
Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace, is shown,
Whose look is hard and stern,—
Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style;
For sanctity call'd, through the isle,
The Saint of Lindisfarne.

XX. Before them stood a guilty pair;
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied;
The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide.
Her cap down o'er her face she drew;
And, on her doublet breast,
She tried to hide the badge of blue,
Lord Marmion's falcon crest.
But, at the Prioress' command,
A Monk undid the silken band,
That tied her tresses fair,
And raised the bonnet from her head,

And down her slender form they spread,
In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister profess'd of Fontevraud,
Whom the church number'd with the dead,
For broken vows, and convent fled.

XXI. When thus her face was given to view,
(Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear
To those bright ringlets glistering fair,)
Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy;
And there she stood so calm and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You might have thought a form of wax,
Wrought to the very life, was there;
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII. Her comrade was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but of fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed;
One, whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
Such tools the Tempter ever needs,
To do the savagest of deeds;
For them no vision'd terrors daunt,
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt,
One fear with them, of all most base,
The fear of death,—alone finds place.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
His body on the floor to dash,
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash;
While his mute partner, standing near,
Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII. Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
Well might her paleness terror speak!
For there were seen in that dark wall,
Two niches, narrow, deep and tall;—
Who enters at such grisly door,
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid,

Of roots, of water, and of bread:
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless;
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Show'd the grim entrance of the porch:
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
Hewn stones and cement were display'd,
And building tools in order laid.

XXIV. These executioners were chose,
As men who were with mankind foes,
And with despite and envy fired,
Into the cloister had retired;
Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
Strove, by deep penance, to efface
Of some foul crime the stain;
For, as the vassals of her will,
Such men the Church selected still,
As either joy'd in doing ill,
Or thought more grace to gain,
If, in her cause, they wrestled down
Feelings their nature strove to own.
By strange device were they brought there,
They knew not how, nor knew not where.

XXV. And now that blind old Abbot rose,
To speak the Chapter's doom,
On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb;
But stopp'd, because that woful Maid,
Gathering her powers, to speak essay'd.
Twice she essay'd, and twice in vain;
Her accents might no utterance gain;
Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
From her convulsed and quivering lip;
'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
You seem'd to hear a distant rill—
'Twas ocean's swells and falls;
For though this vault of sin and fear
Was to the sounding surge so near,
A tempest there you scarce could hear,
So massive were the walls.

XXVI. At length, an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her heart,
And light came to her eye,
And colour dawn'd upon her cheek,
A hectic and a flutter'd streak,

Like that left on the Cheviot peak,
By Autumn's stormy sky;
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke she gather'd strength,
And arm'd herself to bear.
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy,
In form so soft and fair.

XXVII. "I speak not to implore your grace,
Well know I, for one minute's space
Successless might I sue:
Nor do I speak your prayers to gain;
For if a death of lingering pain,
To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,
Vain are your masses too.—
I listen'd to a traitor's tale,
I left the convent and the veil:
For three long years I bow'd my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride;
And well my folly's meed he gave,
Who forfeited, to be his slave,
All here, and all beyond the grave.—
He saw young Clara's face more fair,
He knew her of broad lands the heir,
Forgot his vows, his faith foreswore,
And Constance was beloved no more.—
'Tis an old tale, and often told;
But did my fate and wish agree,
Ne'er had been read, in story old,
Of maiden true betray'd for gold,
That loved, or was avenged, like me!

XXVIII. "The King approved his favourite's aim;
In vain a rival barr'd his claim,
Whose fate with Clare's was plight,
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge—and on they came,
In mortal lists to fight.
Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are pray'd,
Their lances in the rest are laid,
They meet in mortal shock;
And, hark! the throng, with thundering cry,
Shout 'Marmion, Marmion! to the sky,
De Wilton to the block!'
Say ye, who preach Heaven shall decide
When in the lists two champions ride,
Say, was Heaven's justice here?

When, loyal in his love and faith,
Wilton found overthrow or death,
Beneath a traitor's spear?
How false the charge, how true he fell,
This guilty packet best can tell."—
Then drew a packet from her breast,
Paused, gather'd voice, and spoke the rest.

XXIX. "Still was false Marmion's bridal staid;
To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
The hated match to shun.
'Ho! shifts she thus?' King Henry cried,
'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were sworn a nun.'
One way remain'd—the King's command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land:
I linger'd here, and rescue plann'd
For Clara and for me:
This caitiff Monk, for gold, did swear,
He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
And, by his drugs, my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be.
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice has undone us both.

XXX. "And now my tongue the secret tells,
Not that remorse my bosom swells,
But to assure my soul that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion.
Had fortune my last hope betray'd,
This packet, to the King convey'd,
Had given him to the headsman's stroke,
Although my heart that instant broke.—
Now, men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still;
And come he slow, or come he fast,
It is but Death who comes at last.

XXXI. "Yet dread me, from my living tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!
If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
Full soon such vengeance will he take,
That you shall wish the fiery Dane
Had rather been your guest again.
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crosier bends,
The ire of a despotic King
Rides forth upon destruction's wing;
Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep

Burst open to the sea-winds' sweep;
Some traveller then shall find my bones
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be."

XXXII. Fix'd was her look, and stern her air:
Back from her shoulders stream'd her hair;
The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
Stared up erectly from her head;
Her figure seem'd to rise more high;
Her voice, despair's wild energy
Had given a tone of prophecy.
Appall'd the astonish'd conclave sate;
With stupid eyes, the men of fate
Gazed on the light inspired form,
And listen'd for the avenging storm;
The judges felt the victim's dread;
No hand was moved, no word was said,
Till thus the Abbot's doom was given,
Raising his sightless balls to heaven:—
"Sister, let thy sorrows cease;
Sinful brother, part in peace!"
From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
Of execution too, and tomb,
Paced forth the judges three;
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell
The butcher-work that there befell,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery.

XXXIII. An hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day;
But, ere they breathed the fresher air,
They heard the shriekings of despair,
And many a stifled groan:
With speed their upward way they take,
(Such speed as age and fear can make,)
And cross'd themselves for terror's sake,
As hurrying, tottering on:
Even in the vesper's heavenly tone,
They seem'd to hear a dying groan,
And bade the passing knell to toll
For welfare of a parting soul.
Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
To Warkworth cell the echoes roll'd,
His beads the wakeful hermit told,
The Bamborough peasant raised his head,

But slept ere half a prayer he said;
So far was heard the mighty knell,
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind,
Then couch'd him down beside the hind,
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound so dull and stern.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

Like April morning clouds, that pass,
With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
And imitate, on field and furrow,
Life's chequer'd scene of joy and sorrow;
Like streamlet of the mountain north,
Now in a torrent racing forth,
Now winding slow its silver train,
And almost slumbering on the plain;
Like breezes of the autumn day,
Whose voice inconstant dies away,
And ever swells again as fast,
When the ear deems its murmur past;
Thus various, my romantic theme
Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
Of Light and Shade's inconstant race;
Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
Weaving its maze irregular;
And pleased, we listen as the breeze
Heaves its wild sigh through Autumn trees;
Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my Tale!

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
I love the licence all too well,
In sounds now lowly, and now strong,
To raise the desultory song?—
Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime,
Some transient fit of lofty rhyme
To thy kind judgment seem'd excuse
For many an error of the muse,
Oft hast thou said, "If, still mis-spent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent,

Go, and to tame thy wandering course,
Quaff from the fountain at the source;
Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb
Immortal laurels ever bloom:
Instructive of the feebler bard,
Still from the grave their voice is heard;
From them, and from the paths they show'd,
Choose honour'd guide and practised road;
Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous days.

"Or deem'st thou not our later time
Yields topic meet for classic rhyme?
Hast thou no elegiac verse
For Brunswick's venerable hearse?
What! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valour bleeds for liberty?—
Oh, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivall'd light sublime,—
Though martial Austria, and though all
The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
Though banded Europe stood her foes—
The star of Brandenburgh arose!
Thou couldst not live to see her beam
For ever quench'd in Jena's stream.
Lamented Chief!—it was not given
To thee to change the doom of Heaven,
And crush that dragon in its birth,
Predestined scourge of guilty earth.
Lamented Chief!—not thine the power,
To save in that presumptuous hour,
When Prussia hurried to the field,
And snatch'd the spear, but left the shield!
Valour and skill 'twas thine to try,
And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.
Ill had it seem'd thy silver hair
The last, the bitterest pang to share,
For princedoms reft, and scutcheons riven,
And birthrights to usurpers given;
Thy land's, thy children's wrongs to feel,
And witness woes thou couldst not heal!
On thee relenting Heaven bestows
For honour'd life an honour'd close;
And when revolves, in time's sure change,
The hour of Germany's revenge,
When, breathing fury for her sake,
Some new Arminius shall awake,
Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
To whet his sword on BRUNSWICK'S tomb.

"Or of the Red-Cross hero[1] teach,
Dauntless in dungeon as on breach:
Alike to him the sea, the shore,
The brand, the bridle, or the oar:
Alike to him the war that calls
Its votaries to the shatter'd walls,
Which the grim Turk, besmear'd with blood,
Against the Invincible made good;
Or that, whose thundering voice could wake
The silence of the polar lake,
When stubborn Russ, and metal'd Swede,
On the warp'd wave their death-game play'd;
Or that, where Vengeance and Affright
Howl'd round the father of the fight,
Who snatch'd, on Alexandria's sand,
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.[2]

"Or, if to touch such chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that wrung
From the wild harp, which silent hung
By silver Avon's holy shore,
Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er;
When she, the bold Enchantress,[3] came,
With fearless hand and heart on flame!
From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure,
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again."

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging,
With praises not to me belonging,
In task more meet for mightiest powers,
Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.
But say, my Erskine, hast thou weigh'd
That secret power by all obey'd,
Which warps not less the passive mind,
Its source conceal'd or undefined;
Whether an impulse, that has birth
Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
One with our feelings and our powers,
And rather part of us than ours;
Or whether fitlier term'd the sway
Of habit, form'd in early day?
Howe'er derived, its force confest
Rules with despotic sway the breast,

[1] Sir Sidney Smith. [2] Sir Ralph Abercromby. [3] Joanna Baillie.

And drags us on by viewless chain,
While taste and reason plead in vain.
Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
He seeks not eager to inhale
The freshness of the mountain gale,
Content to rear his whiten'd wall
Beside the dank and dull canal?
He'll say, from youth he loved to see
The white sail gliding by the tree.
Or see yon weather-beaten hind,
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak;
Through England's laughing meads he goes,
And England's wealth around him flows;
Ask, if it would content him well,
At ease in those gay plains to dwell,
Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the neat cottage peeps between?
No! not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range:
Not for fair Devon's meads forsake
Bennevis grey, and Garry's lake.

Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along,
To claim, perchance, heroic song;
Though sigh'd no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claim'd homage from a shepherd's reed;
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl

Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round survey'd;
And still I thought that shatter'd tower
The mightiest work of human power;
And marvell'd as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
And, home returning, fill'd the hall
With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.
Methought that still with trump and clang,
The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars,
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their Highland height,
The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretch'd at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war display'd;
And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scatter'd Southron fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
Anew, each kind familiar face,
That brighten'd at our evening fire!
From the thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd Sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;
Whose eye, in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Show'd what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought;
To him the venerable Priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint;
Alas! whose speech too oft I broke

With gambol rude and timeless joke:
For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child;
But half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, caress'd.

For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
The classic poet's well-conn'd task?
Nay, Erskine, nay—On the wild hill
Let the wild heath-bell flourish still;
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
But freely let the woodbine twine,
And leave, untrimm'd the eglantine:
Nay, my friend, nay—Since oft thy praise
Hath given fresh vigour to my lays;
Since oft thy judgment could refine
My flatten'd thought, or cumbrous line;
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend.
Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
Flow forth, flow unrestrain'd, my Tale!

CANTO THIRD

THE HOSTEL, OR INN

1. The livelong day Lord Marmion rode:
The mountain path the Palmer show'd,
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse forayers were abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely fail'd to bar their way.
Oft on the trampling band, from crown
Of some tall cliff, the deer look'd down;
On wing of jet, from his repose
In the deep heath, the black-cock rose;
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow;
And when the stony path began,
By which the naked peak they wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been pass'd before
They gain'd the height of Lammermoor;
Thence winding down the northern way,
Before them, at the close of day,
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

II. No summons calls them to the tower,
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the Lord was gone;
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to unclose,
So late, to unknown friends or foes.
On through the hamlet as they paced,
Before a porch, whose front was graced
With bush and flagon trimly placed,
Lord Marmion drew his rein:
The village inn seem'd large, though rude;
Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamour fills the hall:
Weighing the labour with the cost,
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

III. Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze;
Might see, where, in dark nook aloof,
The rafters of the sooty roof
Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
And savoury haunch of deer.
The chimney arch projected wide;
Above, around it, and beside,
Were tools for housewives' hand;
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And view'd around the blazing hearth.
His followers mix in noisy mirth;
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
From ancient vessels ranged aside,
Full actively their host supplied.

IV. Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest;
And oft Lord Marmion deign'd to aid,
And mingle in the mirth they made;
For though, with men of high degree,
The proudest of the proud was he,

Yet, train'd in camps, he knew the art
To win the soldier's hardy heart.
They love a captain to obey,
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May;
With open hand, and brow as free,
Lover of wine and minstrelsy;
Ever the first to scale a tower,
As venturous in a lady's bower:—
Such buxom chief shall lead his host
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

v. Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the Palmer stood;
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fix'd on Marmion was his look,
Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,
Strove by a frown to quell;
But not for that, though more than once
Full met their stern encountering glance,
The Palmer's visage fell.

vi. By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud;
For still, as squire and archer stared
On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gazed at length in silence drear,
Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
Thus whisper'd forth his mind:—
"Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such sight?
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light
Glances beneath his cowl!
Full on our Lord he sets his eye;
For his best palfrey, would not I
Endure that sullen scowl."

vii. But Marmion, as to chase the awe
Which thus had quell'd their hearts, who saw
The ever-varying fire-light show
That figure stern and face of woe,
Now call'd upon a squire:—
"Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away?
We slumber by the fire."—

viii. "So please you," thus the youth rejoin'd,
"Our choicest minstrel's left behind.

Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustom'd Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike;
To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush
Sings livelier from a spring-tide bush,
No nightingale her love-lorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavish'd on rocks, and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.
Now must I venture, as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay."

IX. A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad;
Such have I heard, in Scottish land,
Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer,
On Lowland plains, the ripen'd ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song:
Oft have I listen'd, and stood still,
As it came soften'd up the hill,
And deem'd it the lament of men
Who languish'd for their native glen;
And thought how sad would be such sound
On Susquehana's swampy ground,
Kentucky's wood-encumber'd brake,
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,
Recall'd fair Scotland's hills again!

SONG

X. Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;
There, thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

XI. Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,—
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

XII. It ceased, the melancholy sound;
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plain'd as if disgrace and ill,
And shameful death, were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band,
And rested with his head a space,
Reclining on his hand.
His thoughts I scan not; but I ween,
That, could their import have been seen,

The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wish'd to be their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII. High minds, of native pride and force,
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have,
Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,
Even while they writhe beneath the smart
Of civil conflict in the heart.
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said,—
"Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
Seem'd in mine ear a death-peal rung,
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?
Say, what may this portend?"—
Then first the Palmer silence broke,
(The livelong day he had not spoke,)
"The death of a dear friend."

XIV. Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity;
Marmion, whose soul could scantly brook,
Even from his King, a haughty look;
Whose accent of command controll'd,
In camps, the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance fail'd him now,
Fall'n was his glance, and flush'd his brow;
For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,
That answer he found none.
Thus oft it haps, that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes vail their eyes
Before their meanest slave.

XV. Well might he falter!—By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betray'd.
Not that he augur'd of the doom,
Which on the living closed the tomb:
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid;

And wroth, because in wild despair,
She practised on the life of Clare;
Its fugitive the Church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave;
And deem'd restraint in convent strange
Would hide her wrongs, and her revenge.
Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
Held Romish thunders idle fear,
Secure his pardon he might hold,
For some slight mulct of penance-gold.
Thus judging, he gave secret way,
When the stern priests surprised their prey.
His train but deem'd the favourite page
Was left behind, to spare his age;
Or other if they deem'd, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard:
Woe to the vassal, who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!

XVI. His conscience slept—he deem'd her well,
And safe secured in distant cell;
But, waken'd by her favourite lay,
And that strange Palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear,
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betray'd and scorn'd,
All lovely on his soul return'd;
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimson'd with shame, with terror mute,
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII. "Alas!" he thought, "how changed that mien!
How changed these timid looks have been,
Since years of guilt, and of disguise,
Have steel'd her brow, and arm'd her eyes!
No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks;
Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair;
And I the cause—for whom were given
Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven!—
Would," thought he, as the picture grows,
"I on its stalk had left the rose!
Oh, why should man's success remove

The very charms that wake his love!—
Her convent's peaceful solitude
Is now a prison harsh and rude;
And, pent within the narrow cell,
How will her spirit chafe and swell!
How brook the stern monastic laws!
The penance how—and I the cause!—
Vigil and scourge—perchance even worse!"—
And twice he rose to cry, "To horse!"—
And twice his Sovereign's mandate came,
Like damp upon a kindling flame;
And twice he thought, "Gave I not charge
She should be safe, though not at large?
They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head."

XVIII. While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
Their Host the Palmer's speech had heard,
And, talkative, took up the word:
"Ay, reverend Pilgrim, you, who stray
From Scotland's simple land away,
To visit realms afar,
Full often learn the art to know
Of future weal, or future woe,
By word, or sign, or star;
Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
If, knight-like, he despises fear,
Not far from hence;—if fathers old
Aright our hamlet legend told."—
These broken words the menials move,
(For marvels still the vulgar love,)
And, Marmion giving licence cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told:—

THE HOST'S TALE

XIX. "A Clerk could tell what years have flown
Since Alexander fill'd our throne,
(Third monarch of that warlike name,)
And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord:
A braver never drew a sword;
A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power:
The same, whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin-Hall.
I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay

Gave you that cavern to survey.
Of lofty roof, and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies:
To hew the living rock profound,
The floor to pave, the arch to round,
There never toil'd a mortal arm,
It all was wrought by word and charm;
And I have heard my grandsire say,
That the wild clamour and affray
Of those dread artisans of hell,
Who labour'd under Hugo's spell,
Sounded as loud as ocean's war,
Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX. "The King Lord Gifford's castle sought,
Deep labouring with uncertain thought;
Even then he muster'd all his host,
To meet upon the western coast:
For Norse and Danish galleys plied
Their oars within the frith of Clyde.
There floated Haco's banner trim,
Above Norweyan warriors grim,
Savage of heart, and large of limb;
Threatening both continent and isle,
Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.
Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
And tarried not his garb to change,
But, in his wizard habit strange,
Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight;
His mantle lined with fox-skins white;
His high and wrinkled forehead bore
A pointed cap, such as of yore
Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore:
His shoes were mark'd with cross and spell,
Upon his breast a pentacle;
His zone, of virgin parchment thin,
Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
Bore many a planetary sign,
Combust, and retrograde, and trine;
And in his hand he held prepared,
A naked sword without a guard.

XXI. "Dire dealings with the fiendish race
Had mark'd strange lines upon his face;
Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
His eyesight dazzled seem'd and dim,
As one unused to upper day;
Even his own menials with dismay

Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly Sire,
In his unwonted wild attire;
Unwonted, for traditions run,
He seldom thus beheld the sun.—
'I know,' he said—his voice was hoarse,
And broken seem'd its hollow force,—
'I know the cause, although untold,
Why the King seeks his vassal's hold:
Vainly from me my liege would know
His kingdom's future weal or woe;
But yet, if strong his arm and heart,
His courage may do more than art.

XXII. "'Of middle air the demons proud,
Who ride upon the racking cloud,
Can read, in fix'd or wandering star,
The issue of events afar;
But still their sullen aid withhold,
Save when by mightier force controll'd.
Such late I summon'd to my hall;
And though so potent was the call,
That scarce the deepest nook of hell
I deem'd a refuge from the spell,
Yet, obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my skill.
But thou—who little know'st thy might,
As born upon that blessed night
When yawning graves, and dying groan,
Proclaim'd hell's empire overthrown,—
With untaught valour shalt compel
Response denied to magic spell.'—
'Gramercy,' quoth our Monarch free,
'Place him but front to front with me,
And, by this good and honour'd brand,
The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,
Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,
The demon shall a buffet bide.'—
His bearing bold the wizard view'd,
And thus, well pleased, his speech renew'd:—
'There spoke the blood of Malcolm!—mark:
Forth pacing hence, at midnight dark,
The rampart seek, whose circling crown
Crests the ascent of yonder down:
A southern entrance shalt thou find;
There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
And trust thine elfin foe to see,
In guise of thy worst enemy:
Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed—
Upon him! and Saint George to speed!

If he go down, thou soon shalt know
Whate'er these airy sprites can show;—
If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
I am no warrant for thy life.'

XXIII. "Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone, and arm'd, forth rode the King
To that old camp's deserted round:
Sir Knight, you well might mark the mound,
Left hand the town,—the Pictish race,
The trench, long since, in blood did trace;
The moor around is brown and bare,
The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,
For there the earliest wild-flowers grow;
But woe betide the wandering wight,
That treads its circle in the night!
The breadth across, a bowshot clear,
Gives ample space for full career:
Opposed to the four points of heaven,
By four deep gaps are entrance given.
The southernmost our Monarch past,
Halted, and blew a gallant blast;
And on the north, within the ring,
Appear'd the form of England's King,
Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
In Palestine waged holy war:
Yet arms like England's did he wield,
Alike the leopards in the shield,
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
The rider's length of limb the same:
Long afterwards did Scotland know,
Fell Edward[1] was her deadliest foe.

XXIV. "The vision made our Monarch start,
But soon he mann'd his noble heart,
And in the first career they ran,
The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man;
Yet did a splinter of his lance
Through Alexander's visor glance,
And razed the skin—a puny wound.
The King, light leaping to the ground,
With naked blade his phantom foe
Compell'd the future war to show.
Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war;

[1] Edward I., surnamed Longshanks.

Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandish'd war-axe wield,
And strike proud Haco from his car,
While all around the shadowy Kings
Denmark's grim ravens cower'd their wings.
'Tis said, that, in that awful night,
Remoter visions met his sight,
Foreshowing future conquests far,
When our sons' sons wage northern war;
A royal city, tower and spire,
Redden'd the midnight sky with fire,
And shouting crews her navy bore,
Triumphant, to the victor shore.
Such signs may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV. "The joyful King turn'd home again,
Headed his host, and quell'd the Dane;
But yearly, when return'd the night
Of his strange combat with the sprite,
His wound must bleed and smart;
Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
The penance of your start.'
Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,
Our Lady give him rest!
Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast;
And many a knight have proved his chance,
In the charm'd ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped;
Save two, as legends tell, and they
Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay.—
Gentles, my tale is said."

XXVI. The quaighs[1] were deep, the liquor strong,
And on the tale the yeoman-throng
Had made a comment sage and long,
But Marmion gave a sign:
And, with their lord, the squires retire;
The rest, around the hostel fire,
Their drowsy limbs recline;
For pillow, underneath each head,
The quiver and the targe were laid.
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
Oppress'd with toil and ale, they snore:

[1] A wooden cup, composed of staves hooped together.

The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

XXVII. Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;
Scarce, by the pale moonlight, were seen
The foldings of his mantle green:
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
Of sport by thicket, or by stream.
Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
A cautious tread his slumber broke,
And, close beside him, when he woke,
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
Stood a tall form, with nodding plume;
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he knew.

XXVIII. —"Fitz-Eustace! rise, I cannot rest;
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,
And graver thoughts have chafed my mood:
The air must cool my feverish blood;
And fain would I ride forth, to see
The scene of elfin chivalry.
Arise, and saddle me my steed;
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves;
I would not, that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
That I could credit such a tale."—
Then softly down the steps they slid,
Eustace the stable door undid,
And, darkling, Marmion's steed array'd,
While, whispering, thus the Baron said:—

XXIX. "Did'st never, good my youth, hear tell,
That on the hour when I was born,
Saint George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
Down from his steed of marble fell,
A weary wight forlorn?
The flattering chaplains all agree,
The champion left his steed to me.
I would, the omen's truth to show,
That I could meet this Elfin Foe!
Blithe would I battle, for the right
To ask one question at the sprite:—
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there be,
An empty race, by fount or sea,
To dashing waters dance and sing,
Or round the green oak wheel their ring."

Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
And from the hostel slowly rode.

xxx. Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
And mark'd him pace the village road,
And listen'd to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.
Wonder it seem'd, in the squire's eyes,
That one, so wary held, and wise,—
Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel, what the church believed,—
Should, stirr'd by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Array'd in plate and mail.
For little did Fitz-Eustace know,
That passions, in contending flow,
Unfix the strongest mind;
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
We welcome fond credulity,
Guide confident, though blind.

xxxi. Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But, patient, waited till he heard,
At distance, prick'd to utmost speed,
The foot-tramp of a flying steed,
Come town-ward rushing on;
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,
Then, clattering on the village road,—
In other pace than forth he yode,[1]
Return'd Lord Marmion.
Down hastily he sprung from selle,
And, in his haste, wellnigh he fell;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
And spoke no word as he withdrew:
But yet the moonlight did betray,
The falcon-crest was soil'd with clay;
And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
By stains upon the charger's knee,
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,
At length to rest the squire reclines.
Broken and short; for still, between,
Would dreams of terror intervene:
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

[1] Went.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH

TO JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

An ancient Minstrel sagely said,
"Where is the life which late we led?"
That motley clown in Arden wood,
Whom humorous Jacques with envy view'd,
Not even that clown could amplify,
On this trite text, so long as I.
Eleven years we now may tell,
Since we have known each other well;
Since, riding side by side, our hand
First drew the voluntary brand;
And sure, through many a varied scene,
Unkindness never came between.
Away these winged years have flown,
To join the mass of ages gone;
And though deep mark'd, like all below,
With chequer'd shades of joy and woe;
Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,
Mark'd cities lost, and empires changed,
While here, at home, my narrower ken
Somewhat of manners saw, and men;
Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears,
Fever'd the progress of these years,
Yet now, days, weeks, and months, but seem
The recollection of a dream,
So still we glide down to the sea
Of fathomless eternity.

Even now it scarcely seems a day,
Since first I tuned this idle lay;
A task so often thrown aside,
When leisure graver cares denied,
That now, November's dreary gale,
Whose voice inspir'd my opening tale,
That same November gale once more
Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
Their vex'd boughs streaming to the sky,
Once more our naked birches sigh,
And Blackhouse heights, and Ettrick Pen,
Have donn'd their wintry shrouds again:
And mountain dark, and flooded mead,
Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.
Earlier than wont along the sky,

Mix'd with the rack, the snow mists fly;
The shepherd, who in summer sun,
Had something of our envy won,
As thou with pencil, I with pen,
The features traced of hill and glen;—
He who, outstretch'd the livelong day,
At ease among the heath-flowers lay,
View'd the light clouds with vacant look,
Or slumber'd o'er his tatter'd book,
Or idly busied him to guide
His angle o'er the lessen'd tide;—
At midnight now, the snowy plain
Finds sterner labour for the swain.

When red hath set the beamless sun,
Through heavy vapours dark and dun;
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail, and sleeted rain,
Against the casement's tinkling pane;
The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,
To shelter in the brake and rocks,
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal and to dangerous task.
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
The blast may sink in mellowing rain;
Till, dark above, and white below,
Decided drives the flaky snow,
And forth the hardy swain must go.
Long, with dejected look and whine,
To leave the hearth his dogs repine;
Whistling and cheering them to aid,
Around his back he wreathes the plaid:
His flock he gathers, and he guides,
To open downs, and mountain-sides,
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
Least deeply lies the drift below.
The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
Stiffens his locks to icicles;
Oft he looks back, while streaming far,
His cottage window seems a star,—
Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
Turns patient to the blast again,
And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
Benumbing death is in the gale:
His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
Close to the hut, no more his own,

Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain:
The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble wail;
And, close beside him, in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their woe,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek to break his rest.

Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
His healthy fare, his rural cot,
His summer couch by greenwood tree,
His rustic kirn's[1] loud revelry,
His native hill-notes, tuned on high,
To Marion of the blithesome eye;
His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
And all Arcadia's golden creed?

Changes not so with us, my Skene,
Of human life the varying scene?
Our youthful summer oft we see
Dance by on wings of game and glee,
While the dark storm reserves its rage,
Against the winter of our age:
As he, the ancient Chief of Troy,
His manhood spent in peace and joy;
But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,
Call'd ancient Priam forth to arms.
Then happy those, since each must drain
His share of pleasure, share of pain,—
Then happy those, beloved of Heaven,
To whom the mingled cup is given;
Whose lenient sorrows find relief,
Whose joys are chasten'd by their grief.
And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
When thou of late wert doom'd to twine,—
Just when thy bridal hour was by,—
The cypress with the myrtle tie.
Just on thy bride her Sire had smiled,
And bless'd the union of his child,
When love must change its joyous cheer,
And wipe affection's filial tear.
Nor did the actions next his end,
Speak more the father than the friend:
Scarce had lamented Forbes paid
The tribute to his Minstrel's shade;
The tale of friendship scarce was told,
Ere the narrator's heart was cold—

[1] The Scottish Harvest-home.

Far may we search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind!
But not around his honour'd urn,
Shall friends alone and kindred mourn;
The thousand eyes his care had dried,
Pour at his name a bitter tide;
And frequent falls the grateful dew,
For benefits the world ne'er knew.
If mortal charity dare claim
The Almighty's attributed name,
Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
"The widow's shield, the orphan's stay."
Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem
My verse intrudes on this sad theme;
For sacred was the pen that wrote,
"Thy father's friend forget thou not:"
And grateful title may I plead,
For many a kindly word and deed,
To bring my tribute to his grave:—
'Tis little—but 'tis all I have.

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
Recalls our summer walks again;
When, doing nought,—and, to speak true,
Not anxious to find aught to do,—
The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
While oft our talk its topic changed,
And, desultory as our way,
Ranged, unconfined, from grave to gay.
Even when it flagg'd, as oft will chance,
No effort made to break its trance,
We could right pleasantly pursue
Our sports in social silence too;
Thou gravely labouring to portray
The blighted oak's fantastic spray;
I spelling o'er, with much delight,
The legend of that antique knight,
Tirante by name, yclep'd the White.
At either's feet a trusty squire,
Pandour and Camp, with eyes of fire,
Jealous, each other's motions view'd,
And scarce suppress'd their ancient feud.
The lāverock whistled from the cloud;
The stream was lively, but not loud;
From the white thorn the May-flower shed
Its dewy fragrance round our head:
Not Ariel lived more merrily
Under the blossom'd bough, than we.

And blithesome nights, too, have been ours,
When Winter stript the summer's bowers.
Careless we heard, what now I hear,
The wild blast sighing deep and drear,
When fires were bright, and lamps beam'd gay,
And ladies tuned the lovely lay;
And he was held a laggard soul,
Who shunn'd to quaff the sparkling bowl.
Then he, whose absence we deplore,
Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,
The longer miss'd, bewail'd the more;
And thou, and I, and dear-loved R——,
And one whose name I may not say,—
For not Mimosa's tender tree
Shrinks sooner from the touch than he,—
In merry chorus well combined,
With laughter drown'd the whistling wind.
Mirth was within; and Care without
Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.
Not but amid the buxom scene
Some grave discourse might intervene—
Of the good horse that bore him best,
His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest:
For, like mad Tom's, our chiefest care,
Was horse to ride, and weapon wear.
Such nights we've had; and, though the game
Of manhood be more sober tame,
And though the field-day, or the drill,
Seem less important now—yet still
Such may we hope to share again.
The sprightly thought inspires my strain!
And mark, how, like a horseman true,
Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

CANTO FOURTH

THE CAMP

1. Eustace, I said, did blithely mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,
And with their light and lively call,
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
Whistling they came, and free of heart,
But soon their mood was changed;
Complaint was heard on every part,
Of something disarranged.

Some clamour'd loud for armour lost;
Some brawl'd and wrangled with the host;
"By Becket's bones," cried one, "I fear,
That some false Scot has stolen my spear!"—
Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second squire,
Found his steed wet with sweat and mire;
Although the rated horse-boy sware,
Last night he dress'd him sleek and fair.
While chafed the impatient squire like thunder,
Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder,—
"Help, gentle Blount! help, comrades all!
Bevis lies dying in his stall:
To Marmion who the plight dare tell,
Of the good steed he loves so well?"
Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,—
"What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed Palmer for our guide?
Better we had through mire and bush
Been lantern-led by Friar Rush."

II. Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guess'd,
Nor wholly understood,
His comrades' clamorous plaints suppress'd;
He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
And did his tale display
Simply as if he knew of nought
To cause such disarray.
Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
Nor marvell'd at the wonders told,—
Pass'd them as accidents of course,
And bade his clarions sound to horse.

III. Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
Had reckon'd with their Scottish host;
And, as the charge he cast and paid,
"Ill thou deserv'st thy hire," he said;
"Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?
Fairies have ridden him all the night,
And left him in a foam!
I trust that soon a conjuring band,
With English cross, and blazing brand,
Shall drive the devils from this land,
To their infernal home:
For in this haunted den, I trow,
All night they trample to and fro."—

The laughing host look'd on the hire,—
"Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
And if thou comest among the rest,
With Scottish broadsword to be blest,
Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
And short the pang to undergo."
Here stay'd their talk,—for Marmion
Gave now the signal to set on.
The Palmer showing forth the way,
They journey'd all the morning day.

IV. The green-sward way was smooth and good,
Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood;
A forest glade, which, varying still,
Here gave a view of dale and hill,
There narrower closed, till over head
A vaulted screen the branches made.
"A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said;
"Such as where errant-knights might see
Adventures of high chivalry;
Might meet some damsel flying fast,
With hair unbound, and looks aghast;
And smooth and level course were here,
In her defence to break a spear.
Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells;
And oft, in such, the story tells,
The damsel kind, from danger freed,
Did grateful pay her champion's meed."
He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind:
Perchance to show his lore design'd;
For Eustace much had pored
Upon a huge romantic tome,
In the hall window of his home,
Imprinted at the antique dome
Of Caxton, or De Worde.
Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,
For Marmion answer'd nought again.

V. Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
In notes prolong'd by wood and hill,
Were heard to echo far;
Each ready archer grasp'd his bow,
But by the flourish soon they know,
They breathed no point of war.
Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,
Lord Marmion's order speeds the band,
Some opener ground to gain;
And scarce a furlong had they rode,
When thinner trees, receding, show'd

A little woodland plain.
Just in that advantageous glade,
The halting troop a line had made,
As forth from the opposing shade
Issued a gallant train.

VI. First came the trumpets, at whose clang
So late the forest echoes rang;
On prancing steeds they forward press'd,
With scarlet mantle, azure vest;
Each at his trump a banner wore,
Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore:
Heralds and pursuivants, by name
Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay, came,
In painted tabards, proudly showing
Gules, Argent, Or, and Azure glowing,
Attendant on a King-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
That feudal strife had often quell'd,
When wildest its alarms.

VII. He was a man of middle age;
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
As on King's errand come;
But in the glances of his eye,
A penetrating, keen, and sly
Expression found its home;
The flash of that satiric rage,
Which, bursting on the early stage,
Branded the vices of the age,
And broke the keys of Rome.
On milk-white palfrey forth he paced;
His cap of maintenance was graced
With the proud heron-plume.
From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,
Silk housings swept the ground,
With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
Embroider'd round and round.
The double tressure might you see,
First by Achaius borne,
The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,
And gallant unicorn.
So bright the King's armorial coat,
That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
In living colours, blazon'd brave,
The Lion, which his title gave.
A train, which well beseem'd his state,
But all unarm'd, around him wait.

Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord Lion King-at-arms!

VIII. Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
Soon as he saw the Lion-King;
For well the stately Baron knew
To him such courtesy was due,
Whom royal James himself had crown'd,
And on his temples placed the round
Of Scotland's ancient diadem:
And wet his brow with hallow'd wine,
And on his finger given to shine
The emblematic gem.
Their mutual greetings duly made,
The Lion thus his message said:—
"Though Scotland's King hath deeply swore
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal court;
Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name,
And honours much his warlike fame,
My liege hath deem'd it shame, and lack
Of courtesy, to turn him back;
And, by his order, I, your guide,
Must lodging fit and fair provide,
Till finds King James meet time to see
The flower of English chivalry."

IX. Though inly chafed at this delay,
Lord Marmion bears it as he may,
The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
Beholding thus his place supplied,
Sought to take leave in vain:
Strict was the Lion-King's command,
That none, who rode in Marmion's band,
Should sever from the train:
"England has here enow of spies
In Lady Heron's witching eyes:"
To Marchmount thus, apart, he said,
But fair pretext to Marmion made.
The right hand path they now decline,
And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X. At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Crichtoun Castle crown's the bank;
For there the Lion's care assigned
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.

That Castle rises on the steep
Of the green vale of Tyne:
And far beneath, where slow they creep,
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine.
The towers in different ages rose;
Their various architecture shows
The builders' various hands;
A mighty mass, that could oppose,
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI. Crichtoun! though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
Thy turrets rude, and totter'd Keep,
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,
Quarter'd in old armorial sort,
Remains of rude magnificence.
Nor wholly yet had time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair;
Nor yet the stony cord unbraced,
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
Adorn thy ruin'd stair.
Still rises unimpair'd below,
The court-yard's graceful portico;
Above its cornice, row and row
Of fair hewn facets richly show
Their pointed diamond form,
Though there but houseless cattle go,
To shield them from the storm,
And, shuddering, still may we explore,
Where oft whilom were captives pent;
The darkness of thy Massy More;
Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
May trace, in undulating line,
The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII. Another aspect Crichtoun show'd,
As through its portal Marmion rode;
But yet 'twas melancholy state
Received him at the outer gate;
For none were in the Castle then,
But women, boys, or aged men.
With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame,
To welcome noble Marmion, came;

Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
Proffer'd the Baron's rein to hold;
For each man that could draw a sword
Had march'd that morning with their lord,
Earl Adam Hepburn,—he who died
On Flodden, by his sovereign's side.
Long may his Lady look in vain!
She ne'er shall see his gallant train,
Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-Dean.
'Twas a brave race, before the name
Of hated Bothwell stain'd their fame.

XIII. And here two days did Marmion rest,
With every rite that honour claims,
Attended as the King's own guest:—
Such the command of Royal James,
Who marshall'd then his land's array,
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
Perchance he would not foeman's eye
Upon his gathering host should pry,
Till full prepared was every band
To march against the English land.
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit
Oft cheer the Baron's moodier fit;
And, in his turn, he knew to prize
Lord Marmion's powerful mind, and wise.—
Train'd in the lore of Rome and Greece,
And policies of war and peace.

XIV. It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlements they walk'd,
And, by the slowly fading light,
Of varying topics talked;
And, unaware, the Herald-bard
Said, Marmion might his toil have spared,
In travelling so far;
For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war;
And, closer question'd, thus he told
A tale, which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enroll'd:—

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE

XV. "Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling,
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling;

And in its park in jovial June,
How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
How blithe the blackbird's lay!
The wild-buck bells from ferny brake,
The coot dives merry on the lake,
The saddest heart might pleasure take
To see all nature gay.
But June is to our sovereign dear
The heaviest month in all the year:
Too well his cause of grief you know,
June saw his father's overthrow.
Woe to the traitors, who could bring
The princely boy against his King!
Still in his conscience burns the sting.
In offices as strict as Lent,
King James's June is ever spent.

XVI. "When last this ruthful month was come,
And in Linlithgow's holy dome
The King, as wont, was praying;
While, for his royal father's soul,
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,
The Bishop mass was saying—
For now the year brought round again
The day the luckless king was slain—
In Katharine's aisle the Monarch knelt,
With sackcloth-shirt, and iron belt,
And eyes with sorrow streaming;
Around him in their stalls of state,
The Thistle's Knight-Companions sate,
Their banners o'er them beaming.
I too was there, and, sooth to tell,
Bedeafen'd with the jangling knell,
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
Through the stain'd casement gleaming;
But, while I marked what next befell,
It seem'd as I were dreaming.
Stepp'd from the crowd a ghostly wight,
In azure gown, with cincture white;
His forehead bald, his head was bare,
Down hung at length his yellow hair.—
Now, mock me not, when, good my Lord,
I pledge to you my knightly word,
That, when I saw his placid grace,
His simple majesty of face,
His solemn bearing, and his pace
So stately gliding on,—
Seem'd to me ne'er did limner paint
So just an image of the Saint,

Who propp'd the Virgin in her faint,—
The loved Apostle John!

xvii. "He stepp'd before the Monarch's chair,
And stood with rustic plainness there,
And little reverence made;
Nor head, nor body, bow'd nor bent,
But on the desk his arm he leant,
And words like these he said,
In a low voice, but never tone,
So thrill'd through vein, and nerve, and bone:—
'My mother sent me from afar,
Sir King, to warn thee not to war,—
Woe waits on thine array;
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
James Stuart, doubly warn'd, beware:
God keep thee as he may!'—
The wondering Monarch seem'd to seek
For answer, and found none;
And when he raised his head to speak,
The monitor was gone.
The Marshal and myself had cast
To stop him as he outward pass'd;
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,
He vanish'd from our eyes,
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
That glances but, and dies."

xviii. While Lindesay told his marvel strange,
The twilight was so pale,
He mark'd not Marmion's colour change,
While listening to the tale;
But, after a suspended pause,
The Baron spoke:—"Of Nature's laws
So strong I held the force,
That never superhuman cause
Could e'er control their course.
And, three days since, had judged your aim
Was but to make your guest your game.
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
What much has changed my sceptic creed,
And made me credit aught."—He staid,
And seem'd to wish his words unsaid:
But, by that strong emotion press'd,
Which prompts us to unload our breast,
Even when discovery's pain,
To Lindesay did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told,
At Gifford, to his train.

Nought of the Palmer says he there,
And nought of Constance, or of Clare;
The thoughts, which broke his sleep, he seems
To mention but as feverish dreams.

XIX. "In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
My burning limbs, and couch'd my head:
Fantastic thoughts return'd;
And, by their wild dominion led,
My heart within me burn'd.
So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed, and forth I rode,
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
Soon reach'd the camp upon the wold,
The southern entrance I pass'd through,
And halted, and my bugle blew.
Methought an answer met my ear,—
Yet was the blast so low and drear,
So hollow, and so faintly blown,
It might be echo of my own.

XX. "Thus judging, for a little space
I listen'd, ere I left the place;
But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they served me true,
When sudden in the ring I view,
In form distinct of shape and hue,
A mounted champion rise.—
I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
In single fight, and mix'd affray,
And ever, I myself may say,
Have borne me as a knight;
But when this unexpected foe
Seem'd starting from the gulf below,—
I care not though the truth I show,—
I trembled with affright;
And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
I scarce could couch it right.

XXI. "Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course,—my charger fell;—
What could he 'gainst the shock of hell?—
I roll'd upon the plain.
High o'er my head, with threatening hand,
The spectre shook his naked brand,—
Yet did the worst remain:
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening hell itself could blast

Their sight, like what I saw!
Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—
A face could never be mistook!
I knew the stern vindictive look,
And held my breath for awe.
I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead,—
I well believe the last;
For ne'er, from vizor raised, did stare
A human warrior, with a glare
So grimly and so ghast.
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade;
But when to good Saint George I pray'd,
(The first time ere I ask'd his aid,)
He plunged it in the sheath;
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seem'd to vanish from my sight:
The moonbeam droop'd, and deepest night
Sunk down upon the heath.—
'Twere long to tell what cause I have
To know his face, that met me there,
Call'd by his hatred from the grave,
To cumber upper air;
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy."

XXII. Marvell'd Sir David of the Mount;
Then, learn'd in story, 'gan recount
Such chance had happ'd of old,
When once, near Norham, there did fight
A spectre fell of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And train'd him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.
"And such a phantom, too, 'tis said,
With Highland broadsword, targe, and plaid,
And fingers, red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,
Or where the sable pine-trees shade
Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,
Dromouchty, or Glenmore.
And yet, whate'er such legends say,
Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,
On mountain, moor, or plain,
Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
True son of chivalry should hold,
These midnight terrors vain;
For seldom have such spirits power

To harm, save in the evil hour,
When guilt we meditate within,
Or harbour unrepented sin."—
Lord Marmion turn'd him half aside,
And twice to clear his voice he tried,
Then press'd Sir David's hand,—
But nought, at length, in answer said;
And here their farther converse staid,
Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the rising day,
To Scotland's camp to take their way.—
Such was the King's command.

XXIII. Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
And I could trace each step they trode.
Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rook, nor stone,
Lies on the path to me unknown.
Much might it boast of storied lore;
But, passing such digression o'er,
Suffice it that the route was laid
Across the furzy hills of Braid.
They pass'd the glen and scanty rill,
And climb'd the opposing bank, until
They gain'd the top of Blackford Hill.

XXIV. Blackford! on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,
While rose, on breezes thin,
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles's mingling din.
Now, from the summit to the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain;
And o'er the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.
To me they make a heavy moan,
Of early friendships past and gone.

XXV. But different far the change has been,
Since Marmion, from the crown
Of Blackford, saw that martial scene
Upon the bent so brown:
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
Spread all the Borough-moor below,
Upland, and dale, and down:—
A thousand did I say? I ween,

Thousands on thousands there were seen,
That chequer'd all the heath between
The streamlet and the town;
In crossing ranks extending far,
Forming a camp irregular;
Oft giving way, where still there stood
Some relics of the old oak wood,
That darkly huge did intervene,
And tamed the glaring white with green:
In these extended lines there lay
A martial kingdom's vast array.

XXVI. For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
And from the southern Redswire edge,
To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge;
From west to east, from south to north,
Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
Marmion might hear the mingled hum
Of myriads up the mountain come;
The horses' tramp, and tingling clank,
Where chiefs review'd their vassal rank,
And charger's shrilling neigh;
And see the shifting lines advance,
While frequent flash'd, from shield and lance,
The sun's reflected ray.

XXVII. Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreaths of failing smoke declare
To embers now the brands decay'd,
Where the night-watch their fires had made.
They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugg'd to war;
And there were Borthwick's Sisters Seven,
And culverins which France had given.
Ill-omen'd gift! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

XXVIII. Nor mark'd they less, where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tail'd, and square,
Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol,[1] there
O'er the pavilions flew.

[1] Each of these feudal ensigns intimated the different rank of those entitled to display them.

Highest and midmost, was descried
The royal banner floating wide;
The staff, a pine-tree, strong and straight,
Pitch'd deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,
Yet bent beneath the standard's weight
Whene'er the western wind unroll'd,
With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,
And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.

xxix. Lord Marmion view'd the landscape bright,—
He view'd it with a chief's delight,—
Until within him burn'd his heart,
And lightning from his eye did part,
As on the battle-day;
Such glance did falcon never dart,
When stooping on his prey.
"Oh! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,
Thy King from warfare to dissuade
Were but a vain essay:
For, by St. George, were that host mine,
Not power infernal nor divine,
Should once to peace my soul incline,
Till I had dimm'd their armour's shine
In glorious battle-fray!"
Answer'd the Bard, of milder mood:
"Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere good,
That kings would think withal,
When peace and wealth their land has bless'd,
'Tis better to sit still at rest,
Than rise, perchance to fall."

xxx. Still on the spot Lord Marmion stay'd,
For fairer scene he ne'er survey'd.
When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red;
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
Where the huge Castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,

Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!
But northward far, with purer blaze,
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
And as each heathy top they kissed,
It gleam'd a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw;
Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-Law:
And, broad between them roll'd,
The gallant Frith the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float,
Like emeralds chased in gold.
Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent;
As if to give his rapture vent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridle hand,
And, making demi-volte in air,
Cried, "Where's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land!"
The Lindesay smiled his joy to see;
Nor Marmion's frown repress'd his glee.

XXXI. Thus while they look'd, a flourish proud,
Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,
And fife, and kettle-drum,
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
And war-pipe with discordant cry,
And cymbal clattering to the sky,
Making wild music bold and high,
Did up the mountain come;
The whilst the bells, with distant chime,
Merrily toll'd the hour of prime,
And thus the Lindesay spoke:
"Thus clamour still the war-notes when
The king to mass his way has ta'en,
Or to St. Katharine's of Sienne,
Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.
To you they speak of martial fame;
But me remind of peaceful game,
When blither was their cheer,
Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,
In signal none his steed should spare,
But strive which foremost might repair
To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII. "Nor less," he said,—"when looking forth,
I view yon Empress of the North
Sit on her hilly throne;

Her palace's imperial bowers,
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
Her stately halls and holy towers—
Nor less," he said, " I moan,
To think what woe mischance may bring,
And how these merry bells may ring
The death-dirge of our gallant king;
Or with the larum call
The burghers forth to watch and ward,
'Gainst southern sack and fires to guard
Dun-Edin's leaguer'd wall.—
But not for my presaging thought,
Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought!
Lord Marmion, I say nay:
God is the guider of the field,
He breaks the champion's spear and shield,—
But thou thyself shalt say,
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
That England's dames must weep in bower,
Her monks the death-mass sing;
For never saw'st thou such a power
Led on by such a King."—
And now, down winding to the plain,
The barriers of the camp they gain,
And there they made a stay.—
There stays the Minstrel, till he fling
His hand o'er every Border string,
And fit his harp the pomp to sing,
Of Scotland's ancient Court and King,
In the succeeding lay.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

Edinburgh.

When dark December glooms the day,
And takes our autumn joys away;
When short and scant the sunbeam throws,
Upon the weary waste of snows,
A cold and profitless regard,
Like patron on a needy bard;
When silvan occupation's done,
And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
And hang, in idle trophy, near,
The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear;
When wiry terrier, rough and grim,

And greyhound, with his length of limb,
And pointer, now employ'd no more,
Cumber our parlour's narrow floor;
When in his stall the impatient steed
Is long condemn'd to rest and feed;
When from our snow-encircled home,
Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,
Since path is none, save that to bring
The needful water from the spring;
When wrinkled news-page, thrice conn'd o'er,
Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
And darkling politician, cross'd,
Inveighs against the lingering post,
And answering housewife sore complains
Of carriers' snow-impeded wains;
When such the country cheer, I come,
Well pleased, to seek our city home;
For converse, and for books, to change
The Forest's melancholy range,
And welcome, with renew'd delight,
The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding rhyme
Lament the ravages of time,
As erst by Newark's riven towers,
And Ettrick stripp'd of forest bowers.
True,—Caledonia's Queen is changed,
Since on her dusky summit ranged,
Within its steepy limits pent,
By bulwark, line, and battlement,
And flanking towers, and laky flood,
Guarded and garrison'd she stood,
Denying entrance or resort,
Save at each tall embattled port;
Above whose arch, suspended, hung
Portcullis spiked with iron prong.
That long is gone,—but not so long,
Since, early closed, and opening late,
Jealous revolved the studded gate,
Whose task, from eve to morning tide,
A wicket churlishly supplied.
Stern then, and steel-girt was thy brow,
Dun-Edin! O, how alter'd now,
When safe amid thy mountain court
Thou sit'st, like Empress at her sport,
And liberal, unconfined, and free,
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,
For thy dark cloud, with umber'd lower,
That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,

Thou gleam'st against the western ray
Ten thousand lines of brighter day.

Not she, the Championess of old,
In Spenser's magic tale enroll'd,
She for the charmed spear renown'd,
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground,—
Not she more changed, when, placed at rest,
What time she was Malbecco's guest,
She gave to flow her maiden vest;
When from the corslet's grasp relieved,
Free to the sight her bosom heaved;
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
Erst hidden by the aventayle;
And down her shoulders graceful roll'd
Her locks profuse, of paly gold.
They who whilom, in midnight fight,
Had marvell'd at her matchless might,
No less her maiden charms approved,
But looking liked, and liking loved.
The sight could jealous pangs beguile,
And charm Malbecco's cares a while;
And he, the wandering Squire of Dames,
Forgot his Columbella's claims,
And passion, erst unknown, could gain
The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane;
Nor durst light Paridel advance,
Bold as he was, a looser glance.
She charm'd, at once, and tamed the heart,
Incomparable Britomarte!

So thou, fair City! disarray'd
Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,
As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
Than in that panoply of war.
Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
Strength and security are flown;
Still, as of yore, Queen of the North!
Still canst thou send thy children forth.
Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
Thy burghers rose to man thy wall,
Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
Thy dauntless voluntary line;
For fosse and turret proud to stand,
Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.
Thy thousands, train'd to martial toil,
Full red would stain their native soil,
Ere from thy mural crown there fell
The slightest knosp, or pinnacle.

And if it come,—as come it may,
Dun-Edin! that eventful day,—
Renown'd for hospitable deed,
That virtue much with Heaven may plead,
In patriarchal times whose care
Descending angels deign'd to share;
That claim may wrestle blessings down
On those who fight for The Good Town,
Destined in every age to be
Refuge of injured royalty;
Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose,
Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw.

Truce to these thoughts!—for, as they rise,
How gladly I avert mine eyes,
Bodings, or true or false, to change,
For Fiction's fair romantic range,
Or for tradition's dubious light,
That hovers 'twixt the day and night:
Dazzling alternately and dim,
Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,
Knights, squires, and lovely dames to see,
Creation of my fantasy,
Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,
And make of mists invading men.
Who loves not more the night of June
Than dull December's gloomy noon?
The moonlight than the fog of frost?
And can we say, which cheats the most?

But who shall teach my harp to gain
A sound of the romantic strain,
Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear,
Famed Beauclerc call'd, for that he loved
The minstrel, and his lay approved?
Who shall these lingering notes redeem,
Decaying on Oblivion's stream;
Such notes as from the Breton tongue
Marie translated, Blondel sung?—
O! born, Time's ravage to repair,
And make the dying Muse thy care;
Who, when his scythe her hoary foe
Was poising for the final blow,
The weapon from his hand could wring,
And break his glass, and shear his wing,
And bid, reviving in his strain,

The gentle poet live again;
Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit;
In letters as in life approved,
Example honour'd, and beloved,—
Dear Ellis! to the bard impart
A lesson of thy magic art,
To win at once the head and heart,—
At once to charm, instruct and mend,
My guide, my pattern, and my friend!

Such minstrel lesson to bestow
Be long thy pleasing task,—but, O!
No more by thy example teach,
—What few can practise, all can preach,—
With even patience to endure
Lingering disease, and painful cure,
And boast affliction's pangs subdued
By mild and manly fortitude.
Enough, the lesson has been given:
Forbid the repetition, Heaven!

Come listen, then! for thou hast known,
And loved the Minstrel's varying tone,
Who, like his Border sires of old,
Waked a wild measure rude and bold,
Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain,
With wonder heard the northern strain.
Come listen! bold in thy applause,
The Bard shall scorn pedantic laws;
And, as the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and plann'd,
But yet so glowing and so grand,—
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
Field, feast, and combat, to renew,
And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,
And all the pomp of chivalry.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COURT

1. The train has left the hills of Braid;
The barrier guard have open made
(So Lindesay bade) the palisade,
That closed the tented ground;

Their men the warders backward drew,
And carried pikes as they rode through,
Into its ample bound.
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
Upon the Southern band to stare.
And envy with their wonder rose,
To see such well-appointed foes;
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
So huge, that many simply thought,
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought;
And little deem'd their force to feel,
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
When rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.

II. Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
Glance every line and squadron through;
And much he marvell'd one small land
Could marshal forth such various band:
For men-at-arms were here,
Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
Like iron towers for strength and weight,
On Flemish steeds of bone and height,
With battle-axe and spear.
Young knights and squires, a lighter train,
Practised their chargers on the plain,
By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,
Each warlike feat to show,
To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
And high curvett, that not in vain
The sword sway might descend amain
On foeman's casque below.
He saw the hardy burghers there
March arm'd, on foot, with faces bare,
For vizor they wore none,
Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight;
But burnished were their corslets bright,
Their brigantines, and gorgets light,
Like very silver shone.
Long pikes they had for standing fight,
Two-handed swords they wore,
And many wielded mace of weight,
And bucklers bright they bore.

III. On foot the yeoman too, but dress'd
In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,
With iron quilted well;
Each at his back (a slender store)
His forty days' provision bore,

As feudal statutes tell.
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,
A crossbow there, a hagbut here,
A dagger-knife, and brand.
Sober he seem'd, and sad of cheer,
As loth to leave his cottage dear,
And march to foreign strand;
Or musing, who would guide his steer,
To till the fallow land.
Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
Did aught of dastard terror lie;
More dreadful far his ire,
Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,
In eager mood to battle came,
Their valour like light straw on flame,
A fierce but fading fire.

IV. Not so the Borderer:—bred to war,
He knew the battle's din afar,
And joy'd to hear it swell.
His peaceful day was slothful ease;
Nor harp, nor pipe, his ear could please
Like the loud slogan yell.
On active steed, with lance and blade,
The light-arm'd pricker plied his trade,—
Let nobles fight for fame;
Let vassals follow where they lead,
Burghers to guard their townships bleed,
But war's the Borderer's game.
Their gain, their glory, their delight,
To sleep the day, maraud the night,
O'er mountain, moss, and moor;
Joyful to fight they took their way,
Scarce caring who might win the day,
Their booty was secure.
These, as Lord Marmion's train pass'd by,
Look'd on at first with careless eye,
Nor marvell'd aught, well taught to know
The form and force of English bow.
But when they saw the Lord array'd
In splendid arms and rich brocade,
Each Borderer to his kinsman said,—
"Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!
Canst guess which road they'll homeward ride?—
O! could we but on Border side,
By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,
Beset a prize so fair!
That fangless Lion, too, their guide,
Might chance to lose his glistering hide;

Brown Maudlin, of that doublet pied,
Could make a kirtle rare."

v. Next, Marmion mark'd the Celtic race,
Of different language, form, and face,
A various race of man;
Just then the Chiefs their tribes array'd,
And wild and garish semblance made,
The chequer'd trews, and belted plaid,
And varying notes the war-pipes bray'd,
To every varying clan;
Wild through their red or sable hair
Look'd out their eyes with savage stare,
On Marmion as he pass'd;
Their legs above the knee were bare;
Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
And harden'd to the blast;
Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage known.
The hunted red-deer's undress'd hide
Their hairy buskins well supplied;
The graceful bonnet deck'd their head:
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid;
A broadsword of unwieldy length,
A dagger proved for edge and strength,
A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but, O!
Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,
To that which England bore.
The Isles-men carried at their backs
The ancient Danish battle-axe.
They raised a wild and wondering cry,
As with his guide rode Marmion by.
Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
And, with their cries discordant mix'd,
Grumbled and yell'd the pipes betwixt.

vi. Thus through the Scottish camp they pass'd,
And reach'd the City gate at last,
Where all around, a wakeful guard,
Arm'd burghers kept their watch and ward.
Well had they cause of jealous fear,
When lay encamp'd, in field so near,
The Borderer and the Mountaineer.
As through the bustling streets they go,
All was alive with martial show:
At every turn, with dinning clang,
The armourer's anvil clash'd and rang;

Or toil'd the swarthy smith, to wheel
The bar that arms the charger's heel;
Or axe, or falchion, to the side
Of jarring grindstone was applied.
Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,
Through street, and lane, and market-place,
Bore lance, or casque, or sword;
While burghers, with important face,
Described each new-come lord,
Discuss'd his lineage, told his name,
His following, and his warlike fame.
The Lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlooked the crowded street;
There must the Baron rest,
Till past the hour of vesper tide,
And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—
Such was the King's behest.
Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns
A banquet rich, and costly wines,
To Marmion and his train;
And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The Baron dons his peaceful weeds,
And following Lindesay as he leads
The palace-halls they gain.

VII. Old Holy-Rood rung merrily,
That night, with wassell, mirth, and glee:
King James within her princely bower,
Feasted the Chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summon'd to spend the parting hour;
For he had charged, that his array
Should southward march by break of day.
Well loved that splendid monarch aye
The banquet and the song,
By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light,
The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long.
This feast outshone his banquets past,
It was his blithest—and his last.
The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,
Cast on the Court a dancing ray;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing;
There ladies touch'd a softer string;
With long-ear'd cap, and motley vest,
The licensed fool retail'd his jest;
His magic tricks the juggler plied;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied;
While some, in close recess apart,

Courted the ladies of their heart,
Nor courted them in vain;
For often, in the parting hour,
Victorious Love asserts his power
O'er coldness and disdain;
And flinty is her heart, can view
To battle march a lover true—
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.

VIII. Through this mix'd crowd of glee and game,
The King to greet Lord Marmion came,
While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know.
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doff'd, to Marmion bending low,
His broider'd cap and plume.
For royal was his garb and mien,
His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,
Trimm'd with the fur of martin wild;
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave, of old renown:
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldric bright;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was button'd with a ruby rare:
And Marmion deem'd he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.

IX. The Monarch's form was middle size;
For feat of strength, or exercise,
Shaped in proportion fair;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye,
His short curl'd beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
And firm his stirrup in the lists;
And, oh! he had that merry glance,
That seldom lady's heart resists.
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and sue;—
Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.

I said he joy'd in banquet bower;
But, 'mid his mirth, 'twas often strange,
How suddenly his cheer would change,
His look o'ercast and lower,
If, in a sudden turn, he felt,
The pressure of his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.
Even so 'twas strange how, evermore,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er
Forward he rush'd, with double glee,
Into the stream of revelry:
Thus, dim-seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he halts, half springs aside;
But feels the quickening spur applied,
And, straining on the tighten'd rein,
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

x. O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway:
To Scotland's Court she came,
To be a hostage for her lord,
Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,
And with the King to make accord,
Had sent his lovely dame.
Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay King allegiance own;
For the fair Queen of France
Sent him a turquois ring and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance;
And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,
And march three miles on Southron land,
And bid the banners of his band
In English breezes dance.
And thus, for France's Queen he drest
His manly limbs in mailed vest;
And thus admitted English fair
His inmost counsels still to share;
And thus, for both, he madly plann'd
The ruin of himself and land!
And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair, nor France's Queen,
Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and sheen,
From Margaret's eyes that fell,—
His own Queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's bower,
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

xi. The Queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
And weeps the weary day,
The war against her native soil,
Her Monarch's risk in battle broil:—
And in gay Holy-Rood, the while,
Dame Heron rises with a smile
Upon the harp to play.
Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er
The strings her fingers flew;
And as she touch'd and tuned them all,
Ever her bosom's rise and fall
Was plainer given to view;
For, all for heat, was laid aside
Her wimple, and her hood untied.
And first she pitch'd her voice to sing,
Then glanced her dark eye on the King,
And then around the silent ring;
And laugh'd, and blush'd, and oft did say
Her pretty oath, by Yea and Nay,
She could not, would not, durst not play!
At length, upon the harp, with glee,
Mingled with arch simplicity,
A soft, yet lively, air she rung,
While thus the wily lady sung:—

LOCHINVAR

Lady Heron's Song

xii. O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:

Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"—

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whisper'd, "'Twere better by far,
To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

XIII. The Monarch o'er the siren hung
And beat the measure as she sung;
And, pressing closer, and more near,
He whisper'd praises in her ear.
In loud applause the courtiers vied;
And ladies wink'd, and spoke aside.
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seem'd to reign
The pride that claims applauses due,
And of her royal conquest too,
A real or feign'd disdain:
Familiar was the look, and told,
Marmion and she were friends of old.
The King observed their meeting eyes,
With something like displeased surprise;
For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
Even in a word, or smile, or look.
Straight took he forth the parchment broad,
Which Marmion's high commission show'd:
"Our Borders sack'd by many a raid,
Our peaceful liege-men robb'd," he said:
"On day of truce our Warden slain,
Stout Barton kill'd, his vassals ta'en—
Unworthy were we here to reign,
Should these for vengeance cry in vain;
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
Our herald has to Henry borne."

XIV. He paused, and led where Douglas stood,
And with stern eye the pageant view'd:
I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
Who coronet of Angus bore,
And, when his blood and heart were high,
Did the third James in camp defy,
And all his minions led to die
On Lauder's dreary flat:
Princes and favourites long grew tame,
And trembled at the homely name
Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat;
The same who left the dusky vale
Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,
Its dungeons, and its towers,
Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
To fix his princely bowers.
Though now, in age, he had laid down
His armour for the peaceful gown,
And for a staff his brand,
Yet often would flash forth the fire,

That could, in youth, a monarch's ire
And minion's pride withstand;
And even that day, at council board,
Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,
Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal lord.

xv. His giant-form, like ruin'd tower,
Though fall'n its muscles' brawny vaunt,
Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,
Seem'd o'er the gaudy scene to lower:
His locks and beard in silver grew;
His eyebrows kept their sable hue.
Near Douglas when the Monarch stood,
His bitter speech he thus pursued:
"Lord Marmion, since these letters say
That in the North you needs must stay,
While slightest hopes of peace remain,
Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,
To say—Return to Lindisfarne,
Until my herald come again.—
Then rest you in Tantallon Hold;
Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—
A chief unlike his sires of old.
He wears their motto on his blade,
Their blazon o'er his towers display'd;
Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,
More than to face his country's foes.
And, I bethink me, by St. Stephen,
But e'en this morn to me was given
A prize, the first fruits of the war,
Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,
A bevy of the maids of Heaven.
Under your guard, these holy maids
Shall safe return to cloister shades,
And, while they at Tantallon stay,
Requiem for Cochran's soul may say."
And, with the slaughter'd favourite's name,
Across the Monarch's brow there came
A cloud of ire, remorse and shame.

xvi. In answer nought could Angus speak;
His proud heart swell'd wellnigh to break:
He turn'd aside, and down his cheek
A burning tear there stole.
His hand the Monarch sudden took,
That sight his kind heart could not brook:
"Now, by the Bruce's soul,
Angus, my hasty speech forgive!

For sure as doth his spirit live,
As he said of the Douglas old,
I well may say of you,—
That never king did subject hold,
In speech more free, in war more bold,
More tender and more true:
Forgive me, Douglas, once again."—
And, while the King his hand did strain,
The old man's tears fell down like rain.
To seize the moment Marmion tried,
And whisper'd to the King aside:
"Oh! let such tears unwonted plead
For respite short from dubious deed!
A child will weep a bramble's smart,
A maid to see her sparrow part,
A stripling for a woman's heart:
But woe awaits a country, when
She sees the tears of bearded men.
Then, oh! what omen, dark and high,
When Douglas wets his manly eye!"

XVII. Displeased was James, that stranger view'd
And tamper'd with his changing mood.
"Laugh those that can, weep those that may,"
Thus did the fiery Monarch say,
"Southward I march by break of day;
And if within Tantallon strong,
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth, in his castle-hall."—
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answer'd, grave, the royal vaunt:
"Much honour'd were my humble home,
If in its halls King James should come;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood;
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby Hills the paths are steep;
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep;
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,
And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's King shall cross the Trent:
Yet pause, brave Prince, while yet you may!"—
The Monarch lightly turn'd away,
And to his nobles loud did call,—
"Lords, to the dance,—a hall, a hall!"[1]
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,

[1] The ancient cry to make room for a dance, or pageant.

And led Dame Heron gallantly;
And minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out—"Blue Bonnets o'er the Border."

XVIII. Leave we these revels now, to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sail'd again
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,
Till James should of their fate decide;
And soon, by his command,
Were gently summon'd to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honour'd, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.
The Abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which saint she should implore;
For, when she thought of Constance, sore
She fear'd Lord Marmion's mood.
And judge what Clara must have felt!
The sword, that hung in Marmion's belt,
Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly, King James had given,
As guard to Whitby's shades,
The man most dreaded under Heaven
By these defenceless maids:
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale
Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
'Mid bustle of a war begun?
They deem'd it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

XIX. Their lodging, so the King assign'd,
To Marmion's, as their guardian, join'd;
And thus it fell, that, passing nigh,
The Palmer caught the Abbess' eye,
Who warn'd him by a scroll,
She had a secret to reveal,
That much concern'd the Church's weal,
And health of sinner's soul;
And, with deep charge of secrecy,
She named a place to meet,
Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,
Above the stately street;
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

xx. At night, in secret, there they came,
The Palmer and the holy Dame.
The moon among the clouds rose high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,
You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
On Giles's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
Were here wrapt deep in shade;
There on their brows the moon-beam broke,
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,
And on the casements play'd.
And other light was none to see,
Save torches gliding far,
Before some chieftain of degree,
Who left the royal revelry
To bowne him for the war.—
A solemn scene the Abbess chose;
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

xxi. "O, holy Palmer!" she began,—
"For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found,—
For His dear Church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly love,—
How vain to those who wed above!—
De Wilton and Lord Marmion woo'd
Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood;
(Idle it were of Whitby's dame,
To say of that same blood I came;)
And once, when jealous rage was high,
Lord Marmion said despiteously,
Wilton was traitor in his heart,
And had made league with Martin Swart,
When he came here on Simnel's part;
And only cowardice did restrain
His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—
And down he threw his glove:—the thing
Was tried, as wont, before the King;
Where frankly did De Wilton own,
That Swart in Gueldres he had known;
And that between them then there went
Some scroll of courteous compliment.

For this he to his castle sent;
But when his messenger return'd,
Judge how De Wilton's fury burn'd!
For in his packet there was laid
Letters that claim'd disloyal aid,
And proved King Henry's cause betray'd.
His fame, thus blighted, in the field
He strove to clear, by spear and shield;—
To clear his fame in vain he strove,
For wondrous are His ways above!
Perchance some form was unobserved;
Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved;
Else how could guiltless champion quail,
Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

XXII. "His squire, who now De Wilton saw
As recreant doom'd to suffer law,
Repentant, own'd in vain,
That, while he had the scrolls in care,
A stranger maiden, passing fair,
Had drench'd him with a beverage rare;
His words no faith could gain.
With Clare alone he credence won,
Who, rather than wed Marmion,
Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
To give our house her livings fair
And die a vestal vot'ress there.
The impulse from the earth was given,
But bent her to the paths of heaven.
A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
Ne'er shelter'd her in Whitby's shade,
No, not since Saxon Edelfled;
Only one trace of earthly strain,
That for her lover's loss
She cherishes a sorrow vain,
And murmurs at the cross.—
And then her heritage;—it goes
Along the banks of Tame;
Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
In meadows rich the heifer lows,
The falconer and huntsman knows
Its woodlands for the game.
Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
And I, her humble vot'ress here,
Should do a deadly sin,
Her temple spoil'd before mine eyes,
If this false Marmion such a prize
By my consent should win;
Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn

That Clare shall from our house be torn,
And grievous cause have I to fear,
Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

XXIII. "Now, prisoner, helpless, and betray'd
To evil power, I claim thine aid,
By every step that thou hast trod
To holy shrine and grotto dim,
By every martyr's tortured limb,
By angel, saint, and seraphim,
And by the Church of God!
For mark:—When Wilton was betray'd,
And with his squire forged letters laid,
She was, alas! that sinful maid,
By whom the deed was done,—
O! shame and horror to be said!—
She was a perjured nun!
No clerk in all the land, like her,
Traced quaint and varying character.
Perchance you may a marvel deem,
That Marmion's paramour
(For such vile thing she was) should scheme
Her lover's nuptial hour;
But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
As privy to his honour's stain,
Illimitable power:
For this she secretly retain'd
Each proof that might the plot reveal,
Instructions with his hand and seal;
And thus Saint Hilda deign'd,
Through sinner's perfidy impure,
Her house's glory to secure,
And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV. "'Twere long, and needless, here to tell,
How to my hand these papers fell;
With me they must not stay.
Saint Hilda keep her Abbess true!
Who knows what outrage he might do,
While journeying by the way?—
O, blessed Saint, if e'er again
I venturous leave thy calm domain,
To travel or by land or main,
Deep penance may I pay!—
Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer:
I give this packet to thy care,
For thee to stop they will not dare;
And O! with cautious speed,
To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,

That he may show them to the King:
And, for thy well-earn'd meed,
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine
A weekly mass shall still be thine,
While priests can sing and read.—
What ail'st thou?—Speak!"—For as he took
The charge, a strong emotion shook
His frame; and, ere reply,
They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,
Like distant clarion feebly blown,
That on the breeze did die;
And loud the Abbess shriek'd in fear,
"Saint Withold, save us!—What is here!
Look at yon City Cross?
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear,
And blazon'd banners toss!"—

xxv. Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillar'd stone,
Rose on a turret octagon;
(But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was sent
In glorious trumpet-clang.
O! be his tomb as lead to lead,
Upon its dull destroyer's head!—
A minstrel's malison[1] is said.)—
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing Nature's law,
Strange, wild, and dimly seen;
Figures that seem'd to rise and die,
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirm'd could ear or eye
Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem, as there
Heralds and Pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound and blazon fair,
A summons to proclaim;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud,
When flings the moon upon her shroud
A wavering tinge of flame;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
From midmost of the spectre crowd,
This awful summons came:—

xxvi. "Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
Whose names I now shall call,

[1] *i.e.* Curse.

Scottish, or foreigner, give ear;
Subjects of him who sent me here,
At his tribunal to appear,
I summon one and all:
I cite you by each deadly sin,
That e'er hath soil'd your hearts within:
I cite you by each brutal lust,
That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—
By wrath, by pride, by fear,
By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,
By the dark grave, and dying groan!
When forty days are pass'd and gone,
I cite you, at your Monarch's throne,
To answer and appear."
Then thunder'd forth a roll of names:
The first was thine, unhappy James!
Then all thy nobles came;
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
Why should I tell their separate style;
Each chief of birth and fame,
Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,
Fore-doom'd to Flodden's carnage pile,
Was cited there by name;
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye;
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self-same thundering voice did say.—
But then another spoke:
"Thy fatal summons I deny,
And thine infernal Lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on High,
Who burst the sinner's yoke."
At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the Abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell;
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She mark'd not, at the scene aghast,
What time, or how, the Palmer pass'd.

XXVII. Shift we the scene.—The camp doth move,
Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
Save when, for weal of those they love,
To pray the prayer, and vow the vow,
The tottering child, the anxious fair,
The grey-hair'd sire, with pious care,

To chapels and to shrines repair—
Where is the Palmer now? and where
The Abbess, Marmion, and Clare?—
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge:
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
The Palmer still was with the band;
Angus, like Lindesay, did command,
That none should roam at large.
But in that Palmer's alter'd mien
A wondrous change might now be seen,
Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand,
When lifted for a native land;
And still look'd high, as if he plann'd
Some desperate deed afar.
His courser would he feed and stroke,
And, tucking up his sable frocke,
Would first his mettle bold provoke,
Then soothe or quell his pride.
Old Hubert said, that never one
He saw, except Lord Marmion,
A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII. Some half-hour's march behind, there came,
By Eustace govern'd fair,
A troop escorting Hilda's Dame,
With all her nuns, and Clare.
No audience had Lord Marmion sought;
Ever he fear'd to aggravate
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate;
And safer 'twas, he thought,
To wait till, from the nuns removed,
The influence of kinsmen loved,
And suit by Henry's self approved,
Her slow consent had wrought.
His was no flickering flame, that dies
Unless when fann'd by looks and sighs,
And lighted oft at lady's eyes;
He long'd to stretch his wide command
O'er luckless Clara's ample land:
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
Although the pang of humbled pride
The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest by that meanness won
He almost loath'd to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the cause,
Which made him burst through honour's laws.

If e'er he lov'd, 'twas her alone,
Who died within that vault of stone.

xxix. And now, when close at hand they saw
North Berwick's town, and lofty Law,
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause a while,
Before a venerable pile,
Whose turrets view'd, afar,
The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,
The ocean's peace or war.
At tolling of a bell, forth came
The convent's venerable Dame,
And pray'd Saint Hilda's Abbess rest
With her, a loved and honour'd guest,
Till Douglas should a bark prepare
To waft her back to Whitby fair.
Glad was the Abbess, you may guess,
And thank'd the Scottish Prioress;
And tedious were to tell, I ween,
The courteous speech that pass'd between.
O'erjoy'd the nuns their palfreys leave;
But when fair Clara did intend,
Like them, from horseback to descend,
Fitz-Eustace said,—"I grieve,
Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
Such gentle company to part;—
Think not discourtesy,
But lords' commands must be obey'd;
And Marmion and the Douglas said,
That you must wend with me.
Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish Earl he show'd,
Commanding, that, beneath his care,
Without delay, you shall repair
To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare."

xxx. The startled Abbess loud exclaim'd;
But she, at whom the blow was aim'd,
Grew pale as death, and cold as lead,—
She deem'd she heard her death-doom read.
"Cheer thee, my child!" the Abbess said,
"They dare not tear thee from my hand,
To ride alone with armed band."—
"Nay, holy mother, nay,"
Fitz-Eustace said, "the lovely Clare
Will be in Lady Angus' care,
In Scotland while we stay;
And, when we move, an easy ride
Will bring us to the English side,

Female attendance to provide
Befitting Gloster's heir:
Nor thinks nor dreams my noble lord,
By slightest look, or act, or word,
To harass Lady Clare.
Her faithful guardian he will be,
Nor sue for slightest courtesy
That e'en to stranger falls,
Till he shall place her, safe and free,
Within her kinsman's halls."
He spoke, and blush'd with earnest grace;
His faith was painted on his face,
And Clare's worst fear relieved.
The Lady Abbess loud exclaim'd
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,
Entreated, threaten'd, grieved;
To martyr, saint, and prophet pray'd,
Against Lord Marmion inveigh'd,
And call'd the Prioress to aid,
To curse with candle, bell, and book.
Her head the grave Cistertian shook:
"The Douglas and the King," she said,
"In their commands will be obey'd;
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall
The maiden in Tantallon hall."

XXXI. The Abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again,—
For much of state she had,—
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And—"Bid," in solemn voice she said,
"Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he shall there written see,
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the Monks forth of Coventry,
Bid him his fate explore!
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurl'd him to the dust,
And, by a base plebeian thrust,
He died his band before.
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me;
He is a Chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse:
Yet oft, in holy writ, we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise:
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,

And Jael thus, and Deborah "——
Here hasty Blount broke in:
"Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band:
St. Anton' fire thee! wilt thou stand
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the Lady preach?
By this good light! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion, for our fond delay,
Will sharper sermon teach.
Come, don thy cap, and mount thy horse;
The Dame must patience take perforce."

XXXII. "Submit we then to force," said Clare,
"But let this barbarous lord despair
His purposed aim to win;
Let him take living, land, and life:
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin:
And if it be the King's decree,
That I must find no sanctuary,
In that inviolable dome,
Where even a homicide might come,
And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood,
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
The kinsmen of the dead;
Yet one asylum is my own
Against the dreaded hour;
A low, a silent, and a lone,
Where kings have little power.
One victim is before me there.—
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
Remember your unhappy Clare!"
Loud weeps the Abbess, and bestows
Kind blessings many a one:
Weeping and wailing loud arose,
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
Of every simple nun.
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
Then took the squire her rein,
And gently led away her steed,
And, by each courteous word and deed,
To cheer her strove in vain.

XXXIII. But scant three miles the band had rode,
When o'er a height they pass'd,
And, sudden, close before them show'd
His towers, Tantallon vast;

Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows,
The fourth did battled walls enclose,
And double mound and fosse.
By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates, an entrance long,
To the main court they cross.
It was a wide and stately square:
Around were lodgings, fit and fair,
And towers of various form,
Which on the court projected far,
And broke its lines quadrangular.
Here was square keep, there turret high,
Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
Whence oft the Warder could descry
The gathering ocean-storm.

XXXIV. Here did they rest.—The princely care
Of Douglas, why should I declare,
Or say they met reception fair?
Or why the tidings say,
Which, varying, to Tantallon came,
By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
With ever varying day?
And, first they heard King James had won
Etall, and Wark, and Ford; and then,
That Norham Castle strong was ta'en.
At that sore marvell'd Marmion;—
And Douglas hoped his Monarch's hand
Would soon subdue Northumberland:
But whisper'd news there came,
That, while his host inactive lay,
And melted by degrees away,
King James was dallying off the day
With Heron's wily dame.—
Such acts to chronicles I yield;
Go seek them there, and see:
Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
And not a history.—
At length they heard the Scottish host
On that high ridge had made their post,
Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain;
And that brave Surrey many a band
Had gather'd in the southern land,
And march'd into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.
Marmion, like charger in the stall,

That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
Began to chafe, and swear:—
"A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle, like a fearful maid,
When such a field is near!
Needs must I see this battle-day:
Death to my fame if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away!
The Douglas, too, I wot not why,
Hath 'bated of his courtesy:
No longer in his halls I'll stay."
Then bade his band they should array
For march against the dawning day.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH

TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

Mertoun House, Christmas.

Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill,
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain;
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew;
Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes deck'd the wall;
They gorged upon the half-dress'd steer;
Caroused in seas of sable beer;
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnaw'd rib, and marrow-bone:
Or listen'd all, in grim delight,
While Scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.
Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,
While wildly-loose their red locks fly,
And dancing round the blazing pile,
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.

Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night;
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung:
That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dress'd with holy green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then open'd wide the Baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doff'd his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
The Lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's head frown'd on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reek'd; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;

White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But, O! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.

Still linger, in our northern clime,
Some remnants of the good old time;
And still, within our valleys here,
We hold the kindred title dear,
Even when, perchance, its far-fetch'd claim
To Southron ear sounds empty name;
For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
Is warmer than the mountain-stream.
And thus, my Christmas still I hold
Where my great-grandsire came of old,
With amber beard, and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air—
The feast and holy-tide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine:
Small thought was his, in after time
E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast,
That he was loyal to his cost;
The banish'd race of kings revered,
And lost his land,—but kept his beard.

In these dear halls, where welcome kind
Is with fair liberty combined;
Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
And flies constraint the magic wand
Of the fair dame that rules the land.
Little we heed the tempest drear,
While music, mirth, and social cheer,
Speed on their wings the passing year.
And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,
When not a leaf is on the bough.
Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
As loath to leave the sweet domain,
And holds his mirror to her face,
And clips her with a close embrace:—
Gladly as he, we seek the dome,
And as reluctant turn us home.

How just that, at this time of glee,
My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee!
For many a merry hour we've known,
And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.
Cease, then, my friend! a moment cease,
And leave these classic tomes in peace!
Of Roman and of Grecian lore,
Sure mortal brain can hold no more.
These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,
"Were pretty fellows in their day;"
But time and tide o'er all prevail—
On Christmas eve a Christmas tale—
Of wonder and of war—"Profane!
What! leave the lofty Latian strain,
Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
To hear the clash of rusty arms:
In Fairy Land or Limbo lost,
To jostle conjurer and ghost,
Goblin and witch!"—Nay, Heber, dear,
Before you touch my charter, hear:
Though Leyden aids, alas! no more,
My cause with many-languaged lore,
This may I say:—in realms of death
Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith;*
Æneas, upon Thracia's shore,
The ghost of murder'd Polydore;
For omens, we in Livy cross,
At every turn, *locutus Bos.*
As grave and duly speaks that ox,
As if he told the price of stocks;
Or held, in Rome republican,
The place of common-councilman.

All nations have their omens drear,
Their legends wild of woe and fear.
To Cambria look—the peasant see,
Bethink him of Glendowerdy,
And shun "the spirit's Blasted Tree."
The Highlander, whose red claymore
The battle turn'd on Maida's shore,
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If ask'd to tell a fairy tale:
He fears the vengeful Elfin King,
Who leaves that day his grassy ring:
Invisible to human ken,
He walks among the sons of men.

Did'st e'er, dear Heber, pass along
Beneath the towers of Franchémont,

Which, like an eagle's nest in air,
Hang o'er the stream and hamlet fair?
Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
A mighty treasure buried lay,
Amass'd through rapine and through wrong
By the last Lord of Franchémont.
The iron chest is bolted hard,
A huntsman sits, its constant guard;
Around his neck his horn is hung,
His hanger in his belt is slung;
Before his feet his blood-hounds lie:
An 'twere not for his gloomy eye,
Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
As true a huntsman doth he look,
As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
Or ever holloo'd to a hound.
To chase the fiend, and win the prize,
In that same dungeon ever tries
An aged necromantic priest;
It is an hundred years at least,
Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,
And neither yet has lost nor won.
And oft the Conjurer's words will make
The stubborn Demon groan and quake;
And oft the bands of iron break,
Or bursts one lock, that still amain,
Fast as 'tis open'd, shuts again.
That magic strife within the tomb
May last until the day of doom,
Unless the adept shall learn to tell
The very word that clench'd the spell,
When Franch'mont lock'd the treasure cell.
An hundred years are pass'd and gone,
And scarce three letters has he won.

Such general superstition may
Excuse for old Pitscottie say;
Whose gossip history has given
My song the messenger from Heaven,
That warn'd, in Lithgow, Scotland's King,
Nor less the infernal summoning;
May pass the Monk of Durham's tale,
Whose demon fought in Gothic mail;
May pardon plead for Fordun grave,
Who told of Gifford's Goblin-cave.
But why such instances to you,
Who, in an instant, can renew
Your treasured hoards of various lore,
And furnish twenty thousand more?

Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest
Like treasures in the Franch'mont chest,
While gripple owners still refuse
To others what they cannot use;
Give them the priest's whole century,
They shall not spell you letters three;
Their pleasure in the books the same
The magpie takes in pilfer'd gem.
Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
Delight, amusement, science, art,
To every ear and eye impart;
Yet who of all who thus employ them,
Can like the owner's self enjoy them?—
But, hark! I hear the distant drum!
The day of Flodden Field is come.—
Adieu, dear Heber! life and health,
And store of literary wealth.

CANTO SIXTH

THE BATTLE

I. While great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanour, changed and cold,
Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold;
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuff'd the battle from afar;
And hopes were none, that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's King in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day;
Whilst these things were, the mournful Clare
Did in the Dame's devotions share:
For the good Countess ceaseless pray'd
To Heaven and Saints, her sons to aid,
And, with short interval, did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high Baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified;—
Yet as Lord Marmion nothing press'd
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthen'd prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

II. I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.

Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repell'd the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vex'd the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.
Above the rest, a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;
The Bloody Heart was in the Field,
And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where
A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign;
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement;
The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
Upon the precipice below.
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works, and walls, were strongly mann'd;
No need upon the sea-girt side;
The steepy rock, and frantic tide,
Approach of human step denied;
And thus these lines and ramparts rude,
Were left in deepest solitude.

III. And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry;
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would glide
Along the dark-grey bulwarks' side,
And ever on the heaving tide
Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff and swelling main,
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
A home she ne'er might see again;
For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown:
It were unseemly sight, he said,
A novice out of convent shade.—

Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,
Again adorn'd her brow of snow;
Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remain'd a cross with ruby stone;
And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound, and broider'd o'er
Her breviary book.
In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale, or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been
To meet a form so richly dress'd,
With book in hand, and cross on breast,
And such a woeful mien.
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
To practise on the gull and crow,
Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,
And did by Mary swear,—
Some love-lorn Fay she might have been,
Or, in Romance, some spell-bound Queen;
For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen
A form so witching fair.

IV. Once walking thus, at evening tide,
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And, sighing, thought—"The Abbess, there,
Perchance, does to her home repair;
Her peaceful rule, where Duty, free,
Walks hand in hand with Charity;
Where oft Devotion's tranced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision and deep mystery;
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.
O! wherefore, to my duller eye,
Did still the Saint her form deny!
Was it, that, sear'd by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn?
Or lie my warm affections low,
With him, that taught them first to glow?
Yet, gentle Abbess, well I knew,
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command,
That ruled thy simple maiden band.

How different now! condemn'd to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride.—
But Marmion has to learn, ere long,
That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
Descended to a feeble girl,
From Red De Clare, stout Gloster's Earl:
Of such a stem, a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

v. "But see!—what makes this armour here?"—
For in her path there lay
Targe, corslet, helm;—she view'd them near.—
"The breast-plate pierced!—Ay, much I fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.—
Thus Wilton!—Oh! not corslet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard,
On yon disastrous day!"—
She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
WILTON himself before her stood!
It might have seem'd his passing ghost
For every youthful grace was lost;
And joy unwonted, and surprise,
Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.—
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words:
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?
Far less can my weak line declare
Each changing passion's shade;
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy, with her angelic air,
And hope, that paints the future fair,
Their varying hues display'd:
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
And mighty Love retains the field.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delay'd,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply:—

DE WILTON'S HISTORY

VI. "Forget we that disastrous day,
When senseless in the lists I lay.
Thence dragg'd,—but how I cannot know,
For sense and recollection fled—
I found me on a pallet low,
Within my ancient beadsman's shed.
Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush, when the old man,
When first our infant love began,
Said we would make a matchless pair?—
Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed,—
He only held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day,
While wounds and fever held their sway.
But far more needful was his care,
When sense return'd to wake despair;
For I did tear the closing wound,
And dash me frantic on the ground,
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,
With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds array'd,
My hated name and form to shade,
I journey'd many a land;
No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
Oft Austin for my reason fear'd,
When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,
Or wild mad schemes uprear'd.
My friend at length fell sick, and said,
God would remove him soon:
And, while upon his dying bed,
He begg'd of me a boon—
If e'er my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquer'd lie,
Even then my mercy should awake,
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII. "Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perish'd of my wound,—

None cared which tale was true:
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his Palmer's dress;
For now that sable slough is shed,
And trimm'd my shaggy beard and head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.
A chance most wondrous did provide,
That I should be that Baron's guide—
I will not name his name!—
Vengeance to God alone belongs;
But, when I think on all my wrongs,
My blood is liquid flame!
And ne'er the time shall I forget,
When, in a Scottish hostel set,
Dark looks we did exchange:
What were his thoughts I cannot tell;
But in my bosom muster'd Hell
Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII. "A word of vulgar augury,
That broke from me, I scarce knew why,
Brought on a village tale;
Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
And sent him armed forth by night.
I borrow'd steed and mail,
And weapons, from his sleeping band;
And, passing from a postern door,
We met, and 'counter'd hand to hand,—
He fell on Gifford moor.
For the death-stroke my brand I drew,
(O then my helmed head he knew,
The Palmer's cowl was gone,)
Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—
My hand the thought of Austin staid;
I left him there alone.—
O good old man! even from the grave
Thy spirit could thy master save:
If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
Had Whitby's Abbess, in her fear,
Given to my hand this packet dear,
Of power to clear my injured fame,
And vindicate De Wilton's name.—
Perchance you heard the Abbess tell
Of the strange pageantry of Hell,
That broke our secret speech—
It rose from the infernal shade,
Or featly was some juggle play'd,
A tale of peace to teach.

Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,
When my name came among the rest.

IX. "Now here, within Tantallon Hold,
To Douglas late my tale I told,
To whom my house was known of old.
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
This eve anew shall dub me knight.
These were the arms that once did turn
The tide of fight on Otterburne,
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,
When the Dead Douglas won the field.
These Angus gave—his armourer's care,
Ere morn shall every breach repair;
For nought, he said, was in his halls,
But ancient armour on the walls,
And aged chargers in the stalls,
And women, priests, and grey-hair'd men;
The rest were all in Twisel glen.
And now I watch my armour here,
By law of arms, till midnight's near;
Then, once again a belted knight,
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

X. "There soon again we meet, my Clare!
This Baron means to guide thee there:
Douglas reveres his King's command,
Else would he take thee from his band.
And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,
Will give De Wilton justice due.
Now meeter far for martial broil,
Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,
Once more"——"O Wilton! must we then
Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more?
And is there not an humble glen,
Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid
Thy task on dale and moor?——
That reddening brow!—too well I know,
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,
While falsehood stains thy name:
Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go!
Clare can a warrior's feelings know
And weep a warrior's shame;
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to fame!"

XI. That night, upon the rocks and bay,
The midnight moon-beam slumbering lay,
And pour'd its silver light, and pure,
Through loop-hole, and through embrazure,
Upon Tantallon tower and hall;
But chief where arched windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride,
The sober glances fall.
Much was there need; though seam'd with scars,
Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
Though two grey priests were there,
And each a blazing torch held high,
You could not by their blaze descry
The chapel's carving fair.
Amid that dim and smoky light,
Chequering the silver moon-shine bright,
A bishop by the altar stood,
A noble lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
Yet show'd his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.
Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doff'd his furr'd gown, and sable hood:
O'er his huge form and visage pale,
He wore a cap and shirt of mail;
And lean'd his large and wrinkled hand
Upon the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont of yore, in battle fray,
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.
He seem'd as, from the tombs around
Rising at judgment-day,
Some giant Douglas may be found
In all his old array;
So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII. Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels;
And think what next he must have felt,
At buckling of the falchion belt!
And judge how Clara changed her hue,
While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger tried,
He once had found untrue!

Then Douglas struck him with his blade:
"Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,
I dub thee knight.
Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir!
For King, for Church, for Lady fair,
See that thou fight."—
And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said—"Wilton! grieve not for thy woes,
Disgrace, and trouble;
For He, who honour best bestows,
May give thee double."—
De Wilton sobb'd, for sob he must—
"Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust
That Douglas is my brother!"—
"Nay, nay," old Angus said, "not so;
To Surrey's camp thou now must go,
Thy wrongs no longer smother.
I have two sons in yonder field;
And, if thou meet'st them under shield,
Upon them bravely—do thy worst;
And foul fall him that blenches first!"

XIII. Not far advanced was morning day,
When Marmion did his troop array
To Surrey's camp to ride;
He had safe conduct for his band,
Beneath the royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide:
The ancient Earl, with stately grace,
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whisper'd in an under tone,
"Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."—
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopp'd to bid adieu:—
"Though something I might plain," he said,
"Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your King's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I staid;
Part we in friendship from your land,
And, noble Earl, receive my hand."—
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke:—
"My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
Be open, at my Sovereign's will,
To each one whom he lists, howe'er
Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
My castles are my King's alone,
From turret to foundation-stone—
The hand of Douglas is his own;

And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp."—

xiv. Burn'd Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And—"This to me!" he said,—
"An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head!
And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,
He, who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate:
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
Even in thy pitch of pride,
Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,
(Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword,)
I tell thee, thou'rt defied!
And if thou said'st I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or Highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied!"—
On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age:
Fierce he broke forth,—"And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go?—
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no!
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, Warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall."—
Lord Marmion turn'd,—well was his need,
And dash'd the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous grate behind him rung:
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume.

xv. The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise;
Nor lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim:
And when Lord Marmion reach'd his band,
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
"Horse! horse!" the Douglas cried, "and chase!"

But soon he rein'd his fury's pace:
" A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.—
A letter forged! Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed!
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the King praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line;
So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.
'Tis pity of him too," he cried:
" Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,
I warrant him a warrior tried."
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle halls.

XVI. The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They cross'd the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scann'd,
And miss'd the Palmer from the band.—
" Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
" He parted at the peep of day;
Good sooth, it was in strange array."—
" In what array? " said Marmion, quick.
" My Lord, I ill can spell the trick;
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And from a loop-hole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,
Wrapp'd in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
By Archibald won in bloody work,
Against the Saracen and Turk:
Last night it hung not in the hall;
I thought some marvel would befall.
And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the Earl's best steed;
A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the Sheriff Sholto say,
The Earl did much the Master pray

To use him on the battle-day;
But he preferr'd "—"Nay, Henry, cease!
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.—
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
What did Blount see at break of day?"—

XVII. "In brief, my lord, we both descried
(For then I stood by Henry's side)
The Palmer mount, and outwards ride,
Upon the Earl's own favourite steed:
All sheathed he was in armour bright,
And much resembled that same knight,
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight:
Lord Angus wish'd him speed."—
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke;—
"Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"
He mutter'd; "'Twas nor fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.—
O dotage blind and gross!
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.—
How stand we now?—he told his tale
To Douglas; and with some avail;
'Twas therefore gloom'd his rugged brow.—
Will Surrey dare to entertain,
'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun;
Must separate Constance from the Nun—
O, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!
A Palmer too!—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye:
I might have known there was but one,
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

XVIII. Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,
Where Lennel's convent closed their march;
(There now is left but one frail arch,
Yet mourn thou not its cells;
Our time a fair exchange has made;
Hard by, in hospitable shade,
A reverend pilgrim dwells,
Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)

Yet did Saint Bernard's Abbot there
Give Marmion entertainment fair,
And lodging for his train and Clare.
Next morn the Baron climb'd the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
Encamp'd on Flodden edge:
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge.
Long Marmion look'd:—at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry
Amid the shifting lines:
The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For, flashing on the hedge of spears
The eastern sunbeam shines.
Their front now deepening, now extending;
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know,
They watch'd the motions of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX. Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twisel Bridge.
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,

Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

xx. And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host Lord Surrey lead?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
—O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—"Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!—
The precious hour has pass'd in vain,
And England's host has gain'd the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden hill.

xxi. Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
"Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
And see ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon:—hap what hap,
My basnet to a prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!—
Yet more! yet more!—how far array'd
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armour flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly."—
"Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, "thou'dst best,
And listen to our lord's behest."—
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,—
"This instant be our band array'd;
The river must be quickly cross'd,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.

If fight King James,—as well I trust,
That fight he will, and fight he must,—
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins."

XXII. Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu;
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And mutter'd as the flood they view,
"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw:
Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately:
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven per force,
The southern bank they gain;
Behind them straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train:
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharm'd, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion staid,
And breathed his steed, his men array'd,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a Cross of Stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command.

XXIII. Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray;
Their marshall'd lines stretch'd east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation pass'd
From the loud cannon mouth;
Not in the close successive rattle,
That breathes the voice of modern battle,

But slow and far between.—
The hillock gain'd, Lord Marmion staid:
"Here, by this Cross," he gently said,
"You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
O! think of Marmion in thy prayer!—
Thou wilt not?—well,—no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
With ten pick'd archers of my train;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.—
But if we conquer, cruel maid,
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again."
He waited not for answer there,
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire; but spurr'd amain,
And, dashing through the battle plain,
His way to Surrey took.

XXIV. "—— The good Lord Marmion, by my life!
Welcome to danger's hour!—
Short greeting serves in time of strife:—
Thus have I ranged my power:
Myself will rule this central host,
Stout Stanley fronts their right,
My sons command the vaward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rear-ward of the fight,
And succour those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
Would gladly to the vanguard go;
Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
With thee their charge will blithely share;
There fight thine own retainers too,
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."—
"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said,
Nor farther greeting there he paid;
But, parting like a thunderbolt,
First in the vanguard made a halt,
Where such a shout there rose
Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry,
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV. Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
With Lady Clare upon the hill!

On which, (for far the day was spent,)
The western sunbeams now were bent.
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
Could plain their distant comrades view:
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
"Unworthy office here to stay!
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
But see! look up—on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and fast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long look'd the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.

XXVI. At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave;
But nought distinct they see:
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain;

Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight:
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntly, and with Home.

XXVII. Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'Twas vain:—But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
Loud were the changing blows;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It waver'd 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear:
"By Heaven, and all its saints! I swear
I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Follow'd by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—
The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
It sunk among the foes.

Then Eustace mounted too:—yet staid
As loath to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast,
To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII. Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone:
Perchance her reason stoops, or reels;
Perchance a courage, not her own,
Braces her mind to desperate tone.—
The scatter'd van of England wheels;—
She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roar'd, "Is Wilton there?"—
They fly, or, madden'd by despair,
Fight but to die,—"Is Wilton there?"
With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drench'd with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strain'd the broken brand;
His arms were smear'd with blood and sand;
Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion! . . .
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said—"By Saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head!
Good-night to Marmion."—
"Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:
He opes his eyes," said Eustace; "peace!"

XXIX. When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:—
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon,—charge again!
Cry—'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!—

Yet my last thought is England's—fly,
To Dacre bear my signet-ring:
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie;
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield:
Edmund is down:—my life is reft;
The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.—
Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets! fly!
Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmur'd,—"Is there none,
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst!"

xxx. O, Woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!—
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the Baron's casque, the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stoop'd her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain's side,
Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn?—behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above, some half-worn letters say,
DRINK. WEARY. PILGRIM. DRINK. AND. PRAY.
FOR. THE. KIND. SOUL. OF. SYBIL. GREY.
WHO. BUILT. THIS. CROSS. AND. WELL.
She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,

And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head:
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

XXXI. Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
And, as she stoop'd his brow to lave—
"Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
"Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"
Then, as remembrance rose,—
"Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine to spare;
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"—
"Alas!" she said, "the while,—
O, think of your immortal weal!
In vain for Constance is your zeal;
She———died at Holy Isle."—
Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound;
Though in the action burst the tide,
In torrents, from his wounded side.
"Then it was truth,"—he said—"I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be!—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand!
A sinful heart makes feeble hand."
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling Monk.

XXXII. With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
And strove to stanch the gushing wound:
The Monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear
For that she ever sung,
"*In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,*
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!"

So the notes rung;—
"Avoid thee, Fiend!—with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand!—
O, look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;
O, think on faith and bliss!—
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this."—
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,
And—STANLEY! was the cry;
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head,
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!—
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"
Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII. By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their King,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vaward wing,
Where Huntly, and where Home?—
O, for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!
In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havock mark their way,
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.—
"O, Lady," cried the Monk, "away!"
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair,
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

xxxiv. But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to town and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong:
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

xxxv. Day dawns upon the mountain's side:—
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,

Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one:
The sad survivors all are gone.—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high,
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
Beseem'd the monarch slain.
But, O! how changed since yon blithe night!—
Gladly I turn me from the sight,
Unto my tale again.

XXXVI. Short is my tale:—Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile;
And there, beneath the southern aisle,
A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear,
(Now vainly for its sight you look;
'Twas levell'd when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral storm'd and took;
But, thanks to Heaven and good Saint Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had!)
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
His hands to heaven upraised;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods a peasant swain,
Follow'd his lord to Flodden plain,—
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as "wede away:"
Sore wounded, Sybil's Cross he spied,
And dragg'd him to its foot, and died,
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en;

And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,
The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII. Less easy task it were, to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone;
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple Cross of Sybil Grey,
And broke her font of stone:
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye
The memorable field descry;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair;
Nor dream they sit upon the grave,
That holds the bones of Marmion brave.—
When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune, and be still.
If ever, in temptation strong,
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong;
If every devious step, thus trod,
Still led thee farther from the road;
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb;
But say, "He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right."

XXXVIII. I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself,
That all through Flodden's dismal night,
Wilton was foremost in the fight;
That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
'Twas Wilton mounted him again;
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hew'd,
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood:
Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all:
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his rank and lands again;
And charged his old paternal shield
With bearings won on Flodden Field.
Nor sing I to that simple maid,
To whom it must in terms be said,
That King and kinsmen did agree,

To bless fair Clara's constancy;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state;
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny, pass'd the joke:
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
And Catherine's hand the stocking threw;
And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
"Love they like Wilton and like Clare!"

L'ENVOY

TO THE READER

Why then a final note prolong,
Or lengthen out a closing song,
Unless to bid the gentles speed,
Who long have listed to my rede?
To Statesmen grave, if such may deign
To read the Minstrel's idle strain,
Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
And patriotic heart—as PITT!
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best;
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true?
And knowledge to the studious sage;
And pillow to the head of age.
To thee, dear school-boy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task, and merry holiday!
To all, to each, a fair good-night,
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!

NOTES

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

The feast was over in Branksome tower.—P. 347.

In the reign of James I., Sir William Scott of Buccleuch, chief of the clan bearing that name, exchanged, with Sir Thomas Inglis of Manor, the estate of Murdiestone, in Lanarkshire, for one-half of the barony of Branksome, or Branxholm, lying upon the Teviot, about three miles above Hawick. He was probably induced to this transaction from the vicinity of Branksome to the extensive domain which he possessed in Ettrick Forest and in Teviotdale.

Branksome Castle continued to be the principal seat of the Buccleuch family while security was any object in their choice of a mansion.

The extent of the ancient edifice can still be traced by some vestiges of its foundation, and its strength is obvious from the situation, on a deep bank surrounded by the Teviot, and flanked by a deep ravine, formed by a precipitous brook. It was anciently surrounded by wood, as appears from the survey of Roxburghshire, made for Pont's Atlas, and preserved in the Advocates' Library. This wood was cut about fifty years ago, but is now replaced by the thriving plantations, which have been formed by the noble proprietor, for miles around the ancient mansion of his forefathers.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall.—P. 348.

The ancient barons of Buccleuch, both from feudal splendour and from their frontier situation, retained in their household at Branksome a number of gentlemen of their own name, who held lands from their chief, for the military service of watching and warding his castle. Satchells tells us, in his doggrel poetry—

> "No baron was better served in Britain;
> The barons of Buckleugh they kept their call.
> Four and twenty gentlemen in their hall,
> All being of his name and kin; . . . "

—— *with Jedwood-axe at saddlebow.*—P. 348.

The Jedwood-axe was a sort of partisan, used by horsemen, as appears from the arms of Jedburgh, which bear a cavalier mounted, and armed with this weapon. It is also called a Jedwood or Jeddart staff.

Bards long shall tell,
How Lord Walter fell.—P. 349

Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch succeeded to his grandfather, Sir David, in 1492. He was a brave and powerful baron, and Warden of the West Marches of Scotland. His death was the consequence of a feud betwixt the Scotts and Kerrs, which, in spite of all means used to bring about an agreement, raged for many years upon the

Borders. Buccleuch was imprisoned, and his estates forfeited, in the year 1535, for levying war against the Kerrs, and restored by act of Parliament, dated 15th March, 1542, during the regency of Mary of Lorraine. But the most signal act of violence to which this quarrel gave rise was the murder of Sir Walter himself, who was slain by the Kerrs in the streets of Edinburgh in 1552. This is the event alluded to in stanza vii.; and the poem is supposed to open shortly after it had taken place.

The havock of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot!—P. 349.

Among other expedients resorted to for stanching the feud betwixt the Scotts and the Kerrs, there was a bond executed in 1529, between the heads of each clan, binding themselves to perform reciprocally the four principal pilgrimages of Scotland, for the benefit of the souls of those of the opposite name who had fallen in the quarrel. This indenture is printed in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. But either it never took effect, or else the feud was renewed shortly afterwards.

With Carr in arms had stood.—P. 350.

The family of Ker, Kerr, or Carr, was very powerful on the Border. Fynes Morrison remarks, in his Travels, that their influence extended from the village of Preston Grange, in Lothian, to the limits of England. Cessford Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family, is situated near the village of Morebattle, within two or three miles of the Cheviot Hills. It has been a place of great strength and consequence, but is now ruinous.

Lord Cranstoun.—P. 350.

The Cranstouns, Lord Cranstoun, are an ancient Border family, whose chief seat was at Crailing, in Teviotdale. They were at this time at feud with the clan of Scott; for it appears that the Lady of Buccleuch, in 1557, beset the Laird of Cranstoun, seeking his life. Nevertheless, the same Cranstoun, or perhaps his son, was married to a daughter of the same lady.

Of Bethune's line of Picardie.—P. 350.

The Bethunes were of French origin, and derived their name from a small town in Artois. There were several distinguished families of the Bethunes in the neighbouring province of Picardy; they numbered among their descendants the celebrated Duc de Sully; and the name was accounted among the most noble in France, while aught noble remained in that country. The family of Bethune, or Beatoun, in Fife, produced three learned and dignified prelates; namely, Cardinal Beaton, and two successive Archbishops of Glasgow, all of whom flourished about the date of the romance. Of this family was descended Dame Janet Beaton, Lady Buccleuch, widow of Sir Walter Scott of Branksome. She was a woman of masculine spirit, as appeared from her riding at the head of her son's clan, after her husband's murder. She also possessed the hereditary abilities of her family in such a degree that the superstition of the vulgar imputed them to supernatural knowledge. With this was mingled, by faction, the foul accusation of her having influenced Queen Mary to the murder of her husband. One of the placards, preserved in Buchanan's Detection, accuses of Darnley's murder "the Erle of Bothwell, Mr. James Balfour, the persoun of

Fliske, Mr. David Chalmers, black Mr. John Spens, who was principal deviser of the murder; and the Quene, assenting thairto, throw the persuasion of the Erle Bothwell, and *the witchcraft of Lady Buckleuch*."

In Padua, far beyond the sea.—P. 350.

Padua was long supposed, by the Scottish peasants, to be the principal school of necromancy. The Earl of Gowrie, slain at Perth, in 1600, pretended, during his studies in Italy, to have acquired some knowledge of the cabala, by which, he said, he could charm snakes, and work other miracles; and, in particular, could produce children without the intercourse of the sexes.—See the examination of Wemyss of Bogie before the Privy Council, concerning Gowrie's Conspiracy.

His form no darkening shadow traced.—P. 350.

The shadow of a necromancer is independent of the sun. Glycas informs us that Simon Magus caused his shadow to go before him, making people believe it was an attendant spirit.—Heywood's *Hierarchie*, p. 475. The vulgar conceive, that when a class of students have made a certain progress in their mystic studies, they are obliged to run through a subterraneous hall, where the devil literally catches the hindmost in the race, unless he crosses the hall so speedily that the arch-enemy can only apprehend his shadow. In the latter case, the person of the sage never after throws any shade; and those, who have thus *lost their shadow*, always prove the best magicians.

A fancied moss-trooper, etc.—P. 352.

This was the usual appellation of the marauders upon the Borders; a profession diligently pursued by the inhabitants on both sides, and by none more actively and successfully than by Buccleuch's clan. Long after the union of the crowns the moss-troopers, although sunk in reputation, and no longer enjoying the pretext of national hostility, continued to pursue their calling.

——tame the Unicorn's pride,
Exalt the Crescent and the Star.—P. 352.

The arms of the Kerrs of Cessford were, *Vert* on a cheveron, betwixt three unicorns' heads erased *argent*, three mullets *sable;* crest, a unicorn's head, erased *proper*. The Scotts of Buccleuch bore, *Or*, on a bend azure; a star of six points betwixt two crescents of the first.

William of Deloraine.—P. 352.

The lands of Deloraine are joined to those of Buccleuch in Ettrick Forest. They were immemorially possessed by the Buccleuch family, under the strong title of occupancy, although no charter was obtained from the crown until 1545. Like other possessions, the lands of Deloraine were occasionally granted by them to vassals, or kinsmen, for Border service. Satchells mentions, among the twenty-four gentlemen-pensioners of the family, "William Scott, commonly called *Cut-at-the-Black*, who had the lands of Nether Deloraine for his service."

Percy's best blood-hounds.—P. 352.

The kings and heroes of Scotland, as well as the Border-riders, were sometimes obliged to study how to evade the pursuit of blood-hounds.

Barbour informs us, that Robert Bruce was repeatedly tracked by sleuth-dogs. On one occasion, he escaped by wading a bow-shot down a brook, and ascending into a tree by a branch which overhung the water; thus, leaving no trace on land of his footsteps, he baffled the scent.

——*the Moat-hill's mound.*—P. 353.

This is a round artificial mount near Hawick, which, from its name (MOT. *Ang. Sax. Concilium, Conventus*) was probably anciently used as a place for assembling a national council of the adjacent tribes. There are many such mounds in Scotland, and they are sometimes, but rarely, of a square form.

——— *the tower of Hazeldean.*—P. 353.

The estate of Hazeldean, corruptly Hassendean, belonged formerly to a family of Scotts, thus commemorated by Satchells:—

" Hassendean came without á call,
The ancientest house among them all."

On Minto-crags.—P. 354.

A romantic assemblage of cliffs, which rise suddenly above the vale of Teviot, in the immediate vicinity of the family-seat, from which Lord Minto takes his title. A small platform, on a projecting crag, commanding a most beautiful prospect, is termed *Barnhills' Bed.* This Barnhills is said to have been a robber, or outlaw. There are remains of a strong tower beneath the rocks, where he is supposed to have dwelt, and from which he derived his name.

Ancient Riddell's fair domain.—P. 354.

The family of Riddell have been very long in possession of the barony called Riddell, or Ryedale, part of which still bears the latter name. Tradition carries their antiquity to a point extremely remote; and is, in some degree, sanctioned by the discovery of two stone coffins, one containing an earthen pot filled with ashes and arms, bearing a legible date, A.D. 727; the other dated 936, and filled with the bones of a man of gigantic size. These coffins were discovered in the foundations of what was, but has long ceased to be, the chapel of Riddell; and as it was argued, with plausibility, that they contained the remains of some ancestors of the family, they were deposited in the modern place of sepulture, comparatively so termed, though built in 1110.

Melrose.—P. 355.

The ancient and beautiful monastery of Melrose was founded by King David I. Its ruins afford the finest specimen of Gothic architecture and Gothic sculpture which Scotland can boast. The stone of which it is built, though it has resisted the weather for so many ages, retains perfect sharpness, so that even the most minute ornaments seem as entire as when newly wrought. In some of the cloisters, as is hinted in the next Canto, there are representations of flowers, vegetables, etc., carved in stone, with accuracy and precision so delicate, that we almost distrust our senses, when we consider the difficulty of subjecting so hard a substance to such intricate and exquisite modulation. This superb convent was dedicated to St. Mary, and the monks were of the Cistertian order.

St. David's ruin'd pile.—P. 356.

The buttresses ranged along the sides of the ruins of Melrose Abbey are richly carved and fretted, containing niches for the statues of saints, and labelled with scrolls, bearing appropriate texts of Scripture. Most of these statues have been demolished.

David I. of Scotland purchased the reputation of sanctity by founding, and liberally endowing, not only the monastery of Melrose, but those of Kelso, Jedburgh, and many others; which led to the well-known observation of his successor, that he was *a sore saint for the crown.*

Save to patter an Ave Mary.—P. 357.

The Borderers were, as may be supposed, very ignorant about religious matters. Colville, in his *Paranesis*, or *Admonition*, states, that the reformed divines were so far from undertaking distant journeys to convert the Heathen, "as I wold wis at God that ye wold only go bot to the Hielands and Borders of our own realm, to gain our awin countreymen, who, for lack of preching and ministration of the sacraments, must, with tyme, becum either infidells, or atheists." But we learn, from Lesley, that, however deficient in real religion, they regularly told their beads, and never with more zeal than when going on a plundering expedition.

And hurl the unexpected dart.—P. 358.

"By my faith," sayd the Duke of Lancaster (to a Portuguese squire), "of all the feates of armes that the Castellyans, and they of your countrey doth use, the castynge of their dertes best pleaseth me, and gladly I wolde se it: for, as I hear say, if they strike one aryghte, without he be well armed, the dart will pierce him thrughe."—Froissart, vol. ii. ch. 44.

O gallant Chief of Otterburne!—P. 358.

The famous and desperate battle of Otterburne was fought 15th August 1388, betwixt Henry Percy, called Hotspur, and James, Earl of Douglas. Both these renowned champions were at the head of a chosen body of troops, and they were rivals in military fame; so that Froissart affirms, "Of all the battayles and encounterynge that I have made mencion of here before in all this hystory, great or smalle, this battayle that I treat of nowe was one of the sorest and best foughten, without cowardes or faynte hertes: for there was neyther knyghte nor squyer but that dyde his devoyre, and foughte hande to hande."

—— *Dark Knight of Liddesdale.*—P. 358.

William Douglas, called the Knight of Liddesdale, flourished during the reign of David II., and was so distinguished by his valour, that he was called the Flower of Chivalry. Nevertheless, he tarnished his renown by the cruel murder of Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, originally his friend and brother in arms. The King had conferred upon Ramsay the sheriffdom of Teviotdale, to which Douglas pretended some claim. In revenge of this preference, the Knight of Liddesdale came down upon Ramsay, while he was administering justice at Hawick, seized and carried him off to his remote and inaccessible castle of Hermitage, where he threw his unfortunate prisoner horse and man, into a dungeon, and left him to perish of hunger. It is said, the miserable captive prolonged his existence for several days by the corn which fell from a granary above the vault in which he was confined.

—— *The wondrous Michael Scott.*—P. 359.

Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie flourished during the thirteenth century, and was one of the ambassadors sent to bring the Maid of Norway to Scotland upon the death of Alexander III. By a poetical anachronism, he is here placed in a later era. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle, printed at Venice in 1496; and several treatises upon natural philosophy, from which he appears to have been addicted to the abstruse studies of judicial astrology, alchymy, physiognomy, and chiromancy. Hence he passed among his contemporaries for a skilful magician; and in the south of Scotland, any work of great labour and antiquity is ascribed, either to the agency of *Auld Michael*, of Sir William Wallace, or of the devil. Tradition varies concerning the place of his burial; some contend for Home Coltrame, in Cumberland; others for Melrose Abbey. But all agree, that his books of magic were interred in his grave, or preserved in the convent where he died.

Salamanca's cave.—P. 359.

Spain, from the relics, doubtless, of Arabian learning and superstition, was accounted a favourite residence of magicians. Pope Sylvester, who actually imported from Spain the use of the Arabian numerals, was supposed to have learned there the magic for which he was stigmatised by the ignorance of his age.—William *of Malmsbury*, lib. ii. cap. 10. There were public schools, where magic, or rather the sciences supposed to involve its mysteries, were regularly taught, at Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca. In the latter city, they were held in a deep cavern; the mouth of which was walled up by Queen Isabella, wife of King Ferdinand.—D'Auton *on Learned Incredulity*, p. 45.

The bells would ring in Notre Dame.—P. 359.

Michael Scott was chosen, it is said, to go upon an embassy, to obtain from the King of France satisfaction for certain piracies committed by his subjects upon those of Scotland. Instead of preparing a new equipage and splendid retinue, the ambassador retreated to his study, opened his book, and evoked a fiend in the shape of a huge black horse, mounted upon his back, and forced him to fly through the air towards France. As they crossed the sea, the devil insidiously asked his rider, What it was that the old women of Scotland muttered at bed-time? A less experienced wizard might have answered that it was the Pater Noster, which would have licensed the devil to precipitate him from his back. But Michael sternly replied, "What is that to thee?—Mount, Diabolus, and fly!" When he arrived at Paris, he tied his horse to the gate of the palace, entered, and boldly delivered his message. An ambassador, with so little of the pomp and circumstance of diplomacy, was not received with much respect, and the King was about to return a contemptuous refusal to his demand, when Michael besought him to suspend his resolution till he had seen his horse stamp three times. The first stamp shook every steeple in Paris, and caused all the bells to ring; the second threw down three of the towers of the palace; and the infernal steed had lifted his hoof to give the third stamp, when the King rather chose to dismiss Michael, with the most ample concessions, than to stand the probable consequences.

The words that cleft Eildon hills in three.—P. 359.

Michael Scott was, once upon a time, much embarrassed by a spirit, for whom he was under the necessity of finding constant employment.

He commanded him to build a *cauld*, or dam-head, across the Tweed at Kelso; it was accomplished in one night, and still does honour to the infernal architect. Michael next ordered, that Eildon hill, which was then a uniform cone, should be divided into three. Another night was sufficient to part its summit into the three picturesque peaks which it now bears. At length the enchanter conquered this indefatigable demon, by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of sea-sand.

That lamp shall burn unquenchably.—P. 360.

Baptista Porta, and other authors who treat of natural magic, talk much of eternal lamps, pretended to have been found burning in ancient sepulchres. Fortunius Licetus investigates the subject in a treatise, *De Lucernis Antiquorum Reconditis*, published at Venice, 1621. One of these perpetual lamps is said to have been discovered in the tomb of Tulliola, the daughter of Cicero. The wick was supposed to be composed of asbestos. Kircher enumerates three different recipes for constructing such lamps; and wisely concludes, that the thing is nevertheless impossible.—*Mundus Subterranneus*, p. 72. Delrio imputes the fabrication of such lights to magical skill.—*Disquisitiones Magicæ*, p. 58.

The Baron's Dwarf his courser held.—P. 363.

The idea of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin Page is taken from a being called Gilpin Horner, who appeared, and made some stay, at a farm-house among the Border-mountains. A gentleman of that country has noted down the following particulars concerning his appearance:—

"The only certain, at least most probable account, that ever I heard of Gilpin Horner, was from an old man, of the name of Anderson, who was born, and lived all his life at Todshaw-hill, in Eskedale-muir, the place where Gilpin appeared and staid for some time. He said there were two men, late in the evening, when it was growing dark, employed in fastening the horses upon the uttermost part of their ground (that is, tying their forefeet together, to hinder them from travelling far in the night), when they heard a voice, at some distance, crying, '*Tint! Tint! Tint!*'[1] One of the men, named Moffat, called out, 'What deil has tint you? Come here.' Immediately a creature, of something like a human form, appeared. It was surprisingly little, distorted in features, and misshapen in limbs. As soon as the two men could see it plainly, they ran home in a great fright, imagining they had met with some goblin. By the way, Moffat fell, and it ran over him, and was home at the house as soon as either of them, and staid there a long time; but I cannot say how long. It was real flesh and blood, and ate and drank, was fond of cream, and, when it could get at it, would destroy a great deal."

The Ladye of Branksome.—P. 364.

"Upon 25th June, 1557, Dame Janet Beatoune Lady Buccleuch, and a great number of the name of Scott, delaitit (accused) for coming to the kirk of St. Mary of the Lowes, to the number of two hundred persons bodin in feire of weire (arrayed in armour), and breaking open the door of the said kirk, in order to apprehend the Laird of Cranstoune for his destruction." On the 20th July, a warrant from the Queen is presented, discharging the justice to proceed against the Lady Buccleuch while new calling.—*Abridgment of Books of Adjournal, in Advocates' Library.*

[1] *Tint* signifies *lost.*

Like a book-bosom'd priest.—P. 367.

"At Unthank, two miles N.E. from the church (of Ewes), there are the ruins of a chapel for divine service, in time of Popery. There is a tradition, that friars were wont to come from Melrose or Jedburgh, to baptise and marry in this parish; and from being in use to carry the mass-book in their bosoms, they were called by the inhabitants, *Book-a-bosomes*. There is a man yet alive, who knew old men who had been baptised by these Book-a-bosomes, and who says one of them, called Hair, used this parish for a very long time."—*Account of Parish of Ewes, apud Macfarlane's MSS.*

All was delusion, naught was truth.—P. 368.

Glamour, in the legends of Scottish superstition, means the magic power of imposing on the eyesight of the spectators, so that the appearance of an object shall be totally different from the reality. The transformation of Michael Scott by the witch of Falsehope, already mentioned, was a genuine operation of glamour. To a similar charm the ballad of Johnny Fa' imputes the fascination of the lovely Countess, who eloped with that gipsy leader:—

"Sae soon as they saw her weel-far'd face,
They cast the *glamour* o'er her."

The running stream dissolved the spell.—P. 369.

It is a firm article of popular faith, that no enchantment can subsist in a living stream. Nay, if you can interpose a brook betwixt you and witches, spectres, or even fiends, you are in perfect safety. Burns's inimitable *Tam o' Shanter* turns entirely upon such a circumstance. The belief seems to be of antiquity. Brompton informs us, that certain Irish wizards could, by spells, convert earthen clods, or stones, into fat pigs, which they sold in the market, but which always reassumed their proper form when driven by the deceived purchaser across a running stream.—*Chronicon Johannis Brompton apud decem Scriptores*, p. 1076.

Would strike below the knee.—P. 370.

To wound an antagonist in the thigh, or leg, was reckoned contrary to the law of arms. In a tilt betwixt Gawain Michael, an English squire, and Joachim Cathore, a Frenchman, "they met at the speare poyntes rudely; the French squyer justed right pleasantly; the Englishman ran too lowe, for he strak the Frenchman depe into the thigh. Wherewith the Erle of Buckingham was right sore displeased, and so were all the other lords, and sayde how it was shamefully done."—FROISSART, vol. i. chap. 366.

And with a charm she stanch'd the blood.—P. 372.

See several charms for this purpose in Reginald Scott's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, p. 273.

"Tom Potts was but a serving man,
But yet he was a doctor good;
He bound his handkerchief on the wound,
And with some kinds of words he stanched the blood."
Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry, Lond. 1791, p. 131.

And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.—P. 372.

Sir Kenelm Digby, in a discourse upon the cure by sympathy, pronounced at Montpelier, and translated into English by R. White, 1658, gives us the following curious surgical case:—

" Mr. James Howel (well known in France for his public works, and particularly for his *Dendrologie*, translated into French by Mons. Baudouin) coming by chance, as two of his best friends were fighting in duel, he did his endeavour to part them; and, putting himselfe between them, seized, with his left hand, upon the hilt of the sword of one of the combatants, while with his right hand, he laid hold of the blade of the other. They, being transported with fury one against the other, struggled to rid themselves of the hinderance their friend made, that they should not kill one another; and one of them roughly drawing the blade of his sword, cuts to the very bone the nerves and muscles of Mr. Howel's hand; and then the other disengaged his hilts, and gave a crosse blow on his adversarie's head, which glanced towards his friend, who heaving up his sore hand to save the blow, he was wounded on the back of his hand as he had been before within. . . . Having searched his hurts, they bound up his hand with one of his garters, to close the veins which were cut, and bled abundantly. They brought him home, and sent for a surgeon. But this being heard at court, the King sent one of his own surgeons; for his Majesty much affected the said Mr. Howel.

" It was my chance to be lodged hard by him; and four or five days after, as I was making myself ready, he came to my house, and prayed me to view his wounds; ' for I understand,' said he, ' that you have extraordinary remedies on such occasions, and my surgeons apprehend some fear that it may grow to a gangrene, and so the hand must be cut off.' In effect, his countenance discovered that he was in much pain, which he said was insupportable, in regard of the extreme inflammation. . . . I asked him then for any thing that had the blood upon it; so he presently sent for his garter, wherewith his hand was first bound; and as I called for a bason of water, as if I would wash my hands, I took a handful of powder of vitriol, which I had in my study, and presently dissolved it. As soon as the bloudy garter was brought me, I put it within the bason, observing, in the interim, what Mr. Howel did, who stood talking with a gentleman in a corner of my chamber, not regarding at all what I was doing; but he started suddenly, as if he had found some strange alteration in himself. I asked him what he ailed? ' I know not what ailes me; but I finde that I feel no more pain. Methinks that a pleasing kinde of freshnesse, as it were a wet cold napkin, did spread over my hand, which hath taken away the inflammation that tormented me before.' . . . To be brief, within five or six dayes the wounds were cicatrised, and entirely healed."

Reginald Scott mentions the same mode of cure:—" . . . they can remedie anie stranger with that verie sword wherewith they are wounded. Yea, and that which is beyond all admiration, if they stroke the sword upward with their fingers, the partie shall feele no pain; whereas, if they draw their fingers downwards, thereupon the partie wounded shall feele intolerable pain." I presume that the success ascribed to the sympathetic mode of treatment might arise from the pains bestowed in washing the wound, and excluding the air, thus bringing on a cure by the first intention, and it is introduced by Dryden in the *Enchanted Island*, a (very unnecessary) alteration of the *Tempest*.

On Penchryst glows a bale of fire.—P. 373.

Bale, beacon-fagot. The Border beacons, from their number and position, formed a sort of telegraphic communication with Edinburgh. —The act of Parliament 1455, c. 48, directs, that one bale or fagot shall be warning of the approach of the English in any manner; two bales that they are *coming indeed;* four bales, blazing beside each other, that the enemy are in great force.

For pathless marsh and mountain cell.—P. 375.

The morasses were the usual refuge of the Border herdsmen, on the approach of an English army.—(*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. p. 393.) Caves, hewed in the most dangerous and inaccessible places, also afforded an occasional retreat. Such caverns may be seen in the precipitous banks of the Teviot at Sunlaws, upon the Ale at Ancram, upon the Jed at Hundalee, and in many other places upon the Border. The banks of the Eske, at Gorton and Hawthornden, are hollowed into similar recesses.

Watt Tinlinn.—P. 376.

This person was, in my younger days, the theme of many a fireside tale. He was a retainer of the Buccleuch family, and held for his Border service a small tower on the frontiers of Liddesdale. Watt was, by profession, a *sutor*, but, by inclination and practice, an archer and warrior. Upon one occasion, the captain of Bewcastle, military governor of that wild district of Cumberland, is said to have made an incursion into Scotland, in which he was defeated and forced to fly. Watt Tinlinn pursued him closely through a dangerous morass; the captain, however, gained the firm ground; and seeing Tinlinn dismounted, and floundering in the bog, used these words of insult:—"Sutor Watt, ye cannot sew your boots; the heels *risp*, and the seams *rive*."[1] "If I cannot sew," retorted Tinlinn, discharging a shaft, which nailed the captain's thigh to his saddle,—"If I cannot sew, I can *yerk*."[2]

Billhope stag.—P. 376.

There is an old rhyme, which thus celebrates the places in Liddesdale remarkable for game:

"Billhope braes for bucks and raes,
And Carit haugh for swine,
And Tarras for the good bull-trout,
If he be ta'en in time."

The bucks and roes, as well as the old swine, are now extinct; but the good bull-trout is still famous.

Belted Will Howard.—P. 376.

Lord William Howard, third son of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded to Naworth Castle, and a large domain annexed to it, in right of his wife Elizabeth, sister of George Lord Dacre, who died without heirs male, in the 11th of Queen Elizabeth. By a poetical anachronism, he is introduced into the romance a few years earlier than he actually flourished. He was warden of the Western Marches: and, from the rigour with which he repressed the Border excesses, the name of Belted Will Howard is still famous in our traditions. In the castle of Naworth, his apartments, containing a bedroom, oratory, and library, are still shown. They impress us with an unpleasing idea of the life of a lord warden of the Marches. Three or four strong doors, separating these rooms from the rest of the castle, indicate the apprehensions of treachery from his garrison; and the secret winding passages, through which he could privately descend into the guardroom, or even into the dungeons, imply the necessity of no small degree of secret superintendence on the part of the governor. As the ancient

[1] *Risp*, creak.—*Rive*, tear.

[2] *Yerk*, to twitch, as shoemakers do, in securing the stitches of their work.

books and furniture have remained undisturbed, the venerable appearance of these apartments, and the armour scattered around the chamber, almost lead us to expect the arrival of the warden in person. Naworth Castle is situated near Brampton, in Cumberland. Lord William Howard is ancestor of the Earls of Carlisle.

Lord Dacre.—P. 376.

The well-known name of Dacre is derived from the exploits of one of their ancestors at the siege of Acre, or Ptolemais, under Richard Cœur de Lion. There were two powerful branches of that name. The first family, called Lord Dacres of the South, held the castle of the same name, and are ancestors to the present Lord Dacre. The other family, descended from the same stock, were called Lord Dacres of the North, and were barons of Gilsland and Graystock. A chieftain of the latter branch was warden of the West Marches during the reign of Edward VI. He was a man of a hot and obstinate character, as appears from some particulars of Lord Surrey's letter to Henry VIII., giving an account of his behaviour at the siege and storm of Jedburgh. It is printed in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, Appendix to the Introduction.

The German hackbut-men.—P. 376.

In the wars with Scotland, Henry VIII. and his successors employed numerous bands of mercenary troops. At the battle of Pinky, there were in the English army six hundred hackbutters on foot, and two hundred on horseback, composed chiefly of foreigners. On the 27th of September, 1549, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector, writes to the Lord Dacre, warden of the West Marches:—"The Almains, in number two thousand, very valiant soldiers, shall be sent to you shortly from Newcastle, together with Sir Thomas Holcroft, and with the force of your wardenry (which we would were advanced to the most strength of horsemen that might be), shall make the attempt to Loughmaben, being of no such strength but that it may be skailed with ladders, whereof, beforehand, we would you caused secretly some number to be provided; or else undermined with the pyke-axe, and so taken: either to be kept for the King's Majesty, or otherwise to be defaced, and taken from the profits of the enemy. And in like manner the house of Carlaverock to be used." Repeated mention occurs of the Almains, in the subsequent correspondence; and the enterprise seems finally to have been abandoned, from the difficulty of providing these strangers with the necessary "victuals and carriages in so poor a country as Dumfries-shire."—*History of Cumberland*, vol. i. Introd. p. lxi. From the battle-pieces of the ancient Flemish painters, we learn, that the Low Country and German soldiers marched to an assault with their right knees bared. And we may also observe, in such pictures, the extravagance to which they carried the fashion of ornamenting their dress with knots of ribbon. This custom of the Germans is alluded to in the *Mirrour for Magistrates*, p. 121.

> "Their pleited garments therewith well accord,
> All jagde and frounst, with divers colours deckt."

"Ready, aye ready," for the field.—P. 377.

Sir John Scott of Thirlestane flourished in the reign of James V., and possessed the estates of Thirlestane, Gamescleuch, etc., lying upon the river of Ettrick, and extending to St. Mary's Loch, at the head of Yarrow. It appears that when James had assembled his nobility, and their feudal followers, at Fala, with the purpose of invading England,

and was, as is well known, disappointed by the obstinate refusal of his peers, this baron alone declared himself ready to follow the King wherever he should lead. In memory of his fidelity, James granted to his family a charter of arms, entitling them to bear a border of fleurs-de-luce, similar to the tressure in the royal arms, with a bundle of spears for the crest; motto, *Ready, aye ready.*

An aged Knight, to danger steel'd,
With many a moss-trooper came on;
And azure in a golden field,
The stars and crescent graced his shield,
Without the bend of Murdieston.—P. 377.

The family of Harden are descended from a younger son of the Laird of Buccleuch, who flourished before the estate of Murdieston was acquired by the marriage of one of those chieftains with the heiress, in 1296. Hence they bear the cognisance of the Scots upon the field; whereas those of the Buccleuch are disposed upon a bend dexter, assumed in consequence of that marriage.—See GLADSTAINE *of Whitelawe's MSS.*, and SCOTT *of Stokoe's Pedigree*, Newcastle, 1783.

Walter Scott of Harden, who flourished during the reign of Queen Mary, was a renowned Border freebooter, concerning whom tradition has preserved a variety of anecdotes, some of which have been published in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border;* others in LEYDEN'S *Scenes of Infancy;* and others, more lately, in *The Mountain Bard*, a collection of Border ballads by Mr. James Hogg. The bugle-horn, said to have been used by this formidable leader, is preserved by his descendant, the present Mr. Scott of Harden. His castle was situated upon the very brink of a dark and precipitous dell, through which a scanty rivulet steals to meet the Borthwick. In the recess of this glen he is said to have kept his spoil, which served for the daily maintenance of his retainers, until the production of a pair of clean spurs, in a covered dish, announced to the hungry band that they must ride for a supply of provisions. He was married to Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and called in song the Flower of Yarrow. He possessed a very extensive estate, which was divided among his five sons. There are numerous descendants of this old marauding Baron.

Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band.—P. 378.

In this, and the following stanzas, some account is given of the mode in which the property in the valley of Esk was transferred from the Beattisons, its ancient possessors, to the name of Scott. It is needless to repeat the circumstances, which are given in the poem, literally as they have been preserved by tradition. Lord Maxwell, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, took upon himself the title of Earl of Morton. The descendants of Beattison of Woodkerrick, who aided the Earl to escape from his disobedient vassals, continued to hold these lands within the memory of man, and were the only Beattisons who had property in the dale. The old people give locality to the story, by showing the Galliard's Haugh, the place where Buccleuch's men were concealed, etc.

Their gathering word was Bellenden.—P. 380.

Bellenden is situated near the head of Borthwick water, and being in the centre of the possessions of the Scotts, was frequently used as their place of rendezvous and gathering word.—*Survey of Selkirkshire, in Macfarlane's MSS.*, Advocates' Library. Hence Satchells calls one part of his genealogical account of the families of that clan, his Bellenden.

The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country, own'd no lord.—P. 382.

The mercenary adventurers, whom, in 1380, the Earl of Cambridge carried to the assistance of the King of Portugal against the Spaniards, mutinied for want of regular pay. At an assembly of their leaders, Sir John Soltier, a natural son of Edward the Black Prince, thus addressed them: "'I counsayle, let us be alle of one alliance, and of one accorde, and let us among ourselves reyse up the banner of St. George, and let us be frendes to God, and enemyes to alle the worlde; for without we make ourselfe to be feared, we gete nothynge.'

"'By my fayth,' quod Sir William Helmon, 'ye saye right well, and so let us do.' They all agreed with one voyce, and so regarded among them who shulde be their capitayne. Then they advysed in the case how they coude nat have a better capitayne than Sir John Soltier. For they sulde than have good leyser to do yvel, and they thought he was more metelyer thereto than any other. Then they raised up the penon of St. George, and cried, 'A Soltier! a Soltier! the valyaunt bastarde! frendes to God, and enemies to all the worlde!'"—FROISSART, vol. i. ch. 393.

That he may suffer march-treason pain.—P. 384.

Several species of offences, peculiar to the Border, constituted what was called march-treason. Among others, was the crime of riding, or causing to ride, against the opposite country during the time of truce. Thus, in an indenture made at the water of Eske, beside Salom, on the 25th day of March, 1334, betwixt noble lords and mighty, Sirs Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, a truce is agreed upon until the 1st day of July; and it is expressly accorded, "Gif ony stellis authir on the ta part, or on the tothyr, that he shall be hanget or heofdit; and gif ony company stellis any gudes within the trieux beforesayd, ane of that company sall be hanget or heofdit, and the remnant sall restore the gudys stolen in the dubble."—*History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, Introd. p. xxxix.

——— *Deloraine*
Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain.—P. 384.

In dubious cases, the innocence of Border criminals was occasionally referred to their own oath. The form of excusing bills, or indictments, by Border-oath, ran thus: "You shall swear by heaven above you, hell beneath you, by your part of Paradise, by all that God made in six days and seven nights, and by God himself, you are whart out sackless of art, part, way, witting, ridd, kenning, having, or recetting of any of the goods and cattels named in this bill. So help you God."—*History of Cumberland*, Introd. p. xxv.

Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword.—P. 384.

The dignity of knighthood, according to the original institution, had this peculiarity, that it did not flow from the monarch, but could be conferred by one who himself possessed it, upon any squire who, after due probation, was found to merit the honour of chivalry. Latterly, this power was confined to generals, who were wont to create knights bannerets after or before an engagement.

When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford.—P. 384.

The battle of Ancram Moor, or Penielheuch was fought A.D. 1545. The English, commanded by Sir Ralph Evers and Sir Brian Latoun,

were totally routed, and both their leaders slain in the action. The Scottish army was commanded by Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, assisted by the Laird of Buccleuch and Norman Lesley.

The blanche lion.—P. 386.

This was the cognisance of the noble house of Howard in all its branches. The crest, or bearing, of a warrior, was often used as a *nomme de guerre.* Thus Richard III. acquired his well-known epithet, *The Boar of York.* In the violent satire on Cardinal Wolsey, written by Roy, commonly, but erroneously, imputed to Dr. Bull, the Duke of Buckingham is called the *Beautiful Swan,* and the Duke of Norfolk, or Earl of Surrey, the *White Lion.*

Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
In single fight.———P. 386.

It may easily be supposed, that trial by single combat, so peculiar to the feudal system, was common on the Borders. In 1558, the well-known Kirkaldy of Grange fought a duel with Ralph Evre, brother to the then Lord Evre, in consequence of a dispute about a prisoner said to have been ill treated by the Lord Evre. Pitscottie gives the following account of the affair:—"The Lord of Ivers his brother provoked William Kircaldy of Grange to fight with him, in singular combat, on horseback, with spears; who, keeping the appointment, accompanied with Monsieur d'Ossel, lieutenant to the French King, and the garrison of Haymouth, and Mr. Ivers, accompanied with the governor and garrison of Berwick, it was discharged, under the pain of treason, that any man should come near the champions within a flight-shot, except one man for either of them, to bear their spears, two trumpets, and two lords to be judges. When they were in readiness, the trumpets sounded, the heraulds cried, and the judges let them go. They then encountered very fiercely; but Grange struck his spear through his adversary's shoulder, and bare him off his horse, being sore wounded: But whether he died, or not, it is uncertain."—P. 202.

He, the jovial harper.—P. 387.

The person here alluded to, is one of our ancient Border minstrels, called Rattling Roaring Willie. This *soubriquet* was probably derived from his bullying disposition; being, it would seem, such a roaring boy, as is frequently mentioned in old plays. While drinking at Newmill, upon Teviot, about five miles above Hawick, Willie chanced to quarrel with one of his own profession, who was usually distinguished by the odd name of Sweet Milk, from a place on Rule Water so called. They retired to a meadow on the opposite side of the Teviot, to decide the contest with their swords, and Sweet Milk was killed on the spot. A thorn-tree marks the scene of the murder, which is still called Sweet Milk Thorn. Willie was taken and executed at Jedburgh, bequeathing his name to the beautiful Scotch air, called "Rattling Roaring Willie."

Black Lord Archibald's battle-laws.—P. 387.

The title to the most ancient collection of Border regulations runs thus:—"Be it remembered, that, on the 18th day of December 1468, Earl *William Douglas* assembled the whole lords, freeholders, and eldest Borderers, that best knowledge had, at the college of *Linclouden;* and there he caused these lords and Borderers bodily to be sworn, the Holy Gospel touched, that they, justly and truly, after their cunning, should decrete, decern, deliver, and put in order and writing, the statutes, ordinances, and uses of marche, that were ordained in

Black Archibald of Douglas's days, and Archibald his son's days, in time of warfare; and they came again to him advisedly with these statutes and ordinances, which were in time of warfare before. The said Earl *William*, seeing the statutes in writing decreed and delivered by the said lords and Borderers, thought them right speedful and profitable to the Borders; the which statutes, ordinances, and points of warfare, he took, and the whole lords and Borderers he caused bodily to be sworn, that they should maintain and supply him at their goodly power, to do the law upon those that should break the statutes underwritten. Also, the said Earl *William*, and lords, and eldest Borderers, made certain points to be treason in time of warfare to be used, which were no treason before his time, but to be treason in his time, and in all time coming."

The Bloody Heart.—P. 390.

The Bloody Heart was the well-known cognisance of the House of Douglas, assumed from the time of good Lord James, to whose care Robert Bruce committed his heart, to be carried to the Holy Land.

And Swinton laid his lance in rest,
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest,
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.—P. 390.

At the battle of Beaugé, in France, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, brother to Henry V., was unhorsed by Sir John Swinton of Swinton, who distinguished him by a coronet set with precious stones, which he wore around his helmet. The family of Swinton is one of the most ancient in Scotland, and produced many celebrated warriors.

And shouting still, A Home! a Home!—P. 390.

The Earls of Home, as descendants of the Dunbars, ancient Earls of March, carried a lion rampant, argent; but, as a difference, changed the colour of the shield from gules to vert, in allusion to Greenlaw, their ancient possession. The slogan, or war-cry, of this powerful family, was, "A Home! a Home!" It was anciently placed in an escroll above the crest. The helmet is armed with a lion's head erased gules, with a cap of state gules, turned up ermine.

Pursued the foot-ball play.—P. 391.

The foot-ball was anciently a very favourite sport all through Scotland, but especially upon the Borders. Sir John Carmichael of Carmichael, Warden of the Middle Marches, was killed in 1600 by a band of the Armstrongs, returning from a foot-ball match. Sir Robert Carey, in his Memoirs, mentions a great meeting, appointed by the Scotch riders to be held at Kelso for the purpose of playing at foot-ball, but which terminated in an incursion upon England.

Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray.—P. 399.

The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and his friends with blood-hounds and bugle-horn, and was called the *hot-trod*. He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom; a privilege which often occasioned bloodshed. In addition to what has been said of the blood-hound, I may add, that the breed was kept up by the Buccleuch family on their Border estates till within the eighteenth century. A person was alive in the memory of man, who remembered a blood-hound being kept at Eldinhope, in Ettrick Forest, for whose maintenance the tenant had an allowance of meal.

A merlin sat upon her wrist.—P. 402.

A merlin, or sparrow-hawk, was actually carried by ladies of rank, as a falcon was, in time of peace, the constant attendant of a knight or baron. See LATHAM *on Falconry*.—Godscroft relates, that when Mary of Lorraine was regent, she pressed the Earl of Angus to admit a royal garrison into his Castle of Tantallon. To this he returned no direct answer; but, as if apostrophising a goss-hawk, which sat on his wrist, and which he was feeding during the Queen's speech, he exclaimed, "The devil's in this greedy glede, she will never be full."—HUME'S *History of the House of Douglas*, 1743, vol. ii. p. 131. Barclay complains of the common and indecent practice of bringing hawks and hounds into churches.

And princely peacock's gilded train.—P. 402.

The peacock, it is well known, was considered, during the times of chivalry, not merely as an exquisite delicacy, but as a dish of peculiar solemnity. After being roasted, it was again decorated with its plumage, and a sponge, dipped in lighted spirits of wine, was placed in its bill. When it was introduced on days of grand festival, it was the signal for the adventurous knights to take upon them vows to do some deed of chivalry, "before the peacock and the ladies."

The boar's head was also a usual dish of feudal splendour. In Scotland it was sometimes surrounded with little banners, displaying the colours and achievements of the baron at whose board it was served.—PINKERTON'S *History*, vol. i. p. 432.

Stout Hunthill.—P. 403.

The Rutherfords of Hunthill were an ancient race of Border Lairds, whose names occur in history, sometimes as defending the frontier against the English, sometimes as disturbing the peace of their own country. Dickon Draw-the-sword was son to the ancient warrior, called in tradition the Cock of Hunthill, remarkable for leading into battle nine sons, gallant warriors, all sons of the aged champion. Mr. Rutherford, late of New York, in a letter to the editor, soon after these songs were first published, quoted, when upwards of eighty years old, a ballad apparently the same with the Raid of the Reid-square, but which apparently is lost, except the following lines:—

"Bauld Rutherfurd he was fu' stout,
With all his nine sons him about,
He brought the lads of Jedbrught out,
And bauldly fought that day."

—— *bit his glove.*—P. 403.

To bite the thumb, or the glove, seems not to have been considered, upon the Border, as a gesture of contempt, though so used by Shakespeare, but as a pledge of mortal revenge. It is yet remembered, that a young gentleman of Teviotdale, on the morning after a hard drinking-bout, observed that he had bitten his glove. He instantly demanded of his companion, with whom he had quarrelled? And, learning that he had had words with one of the party, insisted on instant satisfaction, asserting, that though he remembered nothing of the dispute, yet he was sure he never would have bit his glove unless he had received some unpardonable insult. He fell in the duel, which was fought near Selkirk, in 1721.

Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.—P. 404.

A tradition preserved by Scott of Satchells, who published, in 1688, *A true History of the Right Honourable name of Scott*, gives the following romantic origin of that name. Two brethren, natives of Galloway, having been banished from that country for a riot, or insurrection, came to Rankleburn, in Ettrick Forest, where the keeper, whose name was Brydone, received them joyfully, on account of their skill in winding the horn, and in the other mysteries of the chase. Kenneth MacAlpin, then King of Scotland, came soon after to hunt in the royal forest, and pursued a buck from Ettrick-heugh to the glen now called Buckcleuch, about two miles above the junction of Rankleburn with the river Ettrick. Here the stag stood at bay; and the King and his attendants, who followed on horseback, were thrown out by the steepness of the hill and the morass. John, one of the brethren from Galloway, had followed the chase on foot; and, now coming in, seized the buck by the horns, and, being a man of great strength and activity, threw him on his back, and ran with his burden about a mile up the steep hill, to a place called Craca-Cross, where Kenneth had halted, and laid the buck at the sovereign's feet.

" The deer being cureed in that place,
At his Majesty's demand,
Then John of Galloway ran apace,
And fetched water to his hand.
The King did wash into a dish,
And Galloway John he wot;
He said, ' Thy name now after this
Shall ever be called John Scott.

" ' The forest and the deer therein,
We commit to thy hand;
For thou shalt sure the ranger be,
If thou obey command;
And for the buck thou stoutly brought
To us up that steep heuch,
Thy designation ever shall
Be John Scott in Buckscleuch.'
. . . . .

" In Scotland no Buckcleuch was then,
Before the buck in the cleuch was slain;
Night's men at first they did appear,
Because moon and stars to their arms they bear.
Their crest, supporters, and hunting-horn,
Show their beginning from hunting came;
Their name, and style, the book doth say,
John gained them both into one day."

WATT'S *Bellenden.*

The Buccleuch arms have been altered, and now allude less pointedly to this hunting, whether real or fabulous. The family now bear *Or*, upon a bend azure, a mullet betwixt two crescents of the field; in addition to which, they formerly bore in the field a hunting-horn. The supporters, now two ladies, were formerly a hound and buck, or, according to the old terms, a *hart of leash* and a *hart of greece*. The family of Scott of Howpasley and Thirlestaine long retained the bugle-horn; they also carried a bent bow and arrow in the sinister cantle,

perhaps as a difference. It is said the motto was—*Best riding by moonlight*, in allusion to the crescents on the shield, and perhaps to the habits of those who bore it. The motto now given is *Amo*, applying to the female supporters.

——— *old Albert Græme,*
The Minstrel of that ancient name.—P. 404.

" John Græme, second son of *Malice*, Earl of *Monteith*, commonly sirnamed *John with the Bright Sword*, upon some displeasure risen against him at court, retired with many of his clan and kindred into the English Borders, in the reign of King Henry the Fourth, where they seated themselves; and many of their posterity have continued there ever since. Mr. Sandford, speaking of them, says (which indeed was applicable to most of the Borderers on both sides), ' They were all stark moss-troopers, and arrant thieves: Both to England and Scotland outlawed; yet sometimes connived at, because they gave intelligence forth of Scotland, and would raise 400 horse at any time upon a raid of the English into Scotland. A saying is recorded of a mother to her son (which is now become proverbial), *Ride, Rowley, hough's i' the pot:* that is, the last piece of beef was in the pot, and therefore it was high time for him to go and fetch more.' "—*Introduction to the History of Cumberland.*

The residence of the Græmes being chiefly in the Debateable Land, so called because it was claimed by both kingdoms, their depredations extended both to England and Scotland, with impunity; for as both wardens accounted them the proper subjects of their own prince, neither inclined to demand reparation for their excesses from the opposite officers, which would have been an acknowledgment of his jurisdiction over them.—See a long correspondence on this subject betwixt Lord Dacre and the English Privy Council, in Introduction to *History of Cumberland.* The Debateable Land was finally divided betwixt England and Scotland, by commissioners appointed by both nations.

The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall.—P. 404.

This burden is adopted, with some alteration, from an old Scottish song, beginning thus:—

" She lean'd her back against a thorn,
The sun shines fair on Carlisle wa':
And there she has her young babe born,
And the lyon shall be lord of a'."

Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?—P. 405.

The gallant and unfortunate Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, was unquestionably the most accomplished cavalier of his time; and his sonnets display beauties which would do honour to a more polished age. He was beheaded on Tower-hill in 1546; a victim to the mean jealousy of Henry VIII., who could not bear so brilliant a character near his throne.

The song of the supposed bard is founded on an incident said to have happened to the Earl in his travels. Cornelius Agrippa, the celebrated alchemist, showed him, in a looking-glass, the lovely Geraldine, to whose service he had devoted his pen and his sword. The vision represented her as indisposed, and reclining upon a couch, reading her lover's verses by the light of a waxen taper.

—— The storm-swept Orcades ;
Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway,
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay.—P. 407.

The St. Clairs are of Norman extraction, being descended from William de St. Clair, second son of Walderne Compte de St. Clair, and Margaret, daughter to Richard Duke of Normandy. He was called, for his fair deportment, the Seemly St. Clair; and, settling in Scotland during the reign of Malcolm Caenmore, obtained large grants of land in Mid-Lothian.—These domains were increased by the liberality of succeeding monarchs to the descendants of the family, and comprehended the baronies of Rosline, Pentland, Cowsland, Cardaine, and several others. It is said a large addition was obtained from Robert Bruce, on the following occasion:—The King, in following the chase upon Pentland Hills, had often started a " white faunch deer," which had always escaped from his hounds; and he asked the nobles, who were assembled around him, whether any of them had dogs, which they thought might be more successful. No courtier would affirm that his hounds were fleeter than those of the king, until Sir William St. Clair of Rosline unceremoniously said, he would wager his head that his two favourite dogs, *Help* and *Hold*, would kill the deer before she could cross the March-burn. The King instantly caught at his unwary offer, and betted the forest of Pentland Moor against the life of Sir William St. Clair. All the hounds were tied up, except a few ratches, or slow-hounds, to put up the deer; while Sir William St Clair, posting himself in the best situation for slipping his dogs, prayed devoutly to Christ, the blessed Virgin, and St. Katherine. The deer was shortly after roused, and the hounds slipped; Sir William following on a gallant steed, to cheer his dogs. The hind, however, reached the middle of the brook; upon which the hunter threw himself from his horse in despair. At this critical moment, however, Hold stopped her in the brook; and Help, coming up, turned her back, and killed her on Sir William's side. The King descended from the hill, embraced Sir William, and bestowed on him the lands of Kirkton, Logan House, Earncraig, etc., in free forestrie. Sir William, in acknowledgment of St. Katherine's intercession, built the chapel of St. Katherine in the Hopes, the churchyard of which is still to be seen. The hill, from which Robert Bruce beheld this memorable chase, is still called the King's Hill; and the place where Sir William hunted, is called the Knight's Field.—*MS. History of the Family of St. Clair, by* RICHARD AUGUSTIN HAY, *Canon of St. Genevieve.*

This adventurous huntsman married Elizabeth, daughter of Malice Spar, Earl of Orkney and Stratherne, in whose right their son Henry was, in 1379, created Earl of Orkney, by Haco, King of Norway. His title was recognised by the Kings of Scotland, and remained with his successors until it was annexed to the crown, in 1471, by act of Parliament. In exchange for this earldom, the castle and domains of Ravenscraig, or Ravensheuch, were conferred on William Saintclair, Earl of Caithness.

Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall.—P. 407.

The Castle of Kirkwall was built by the St. Clairs, while Earls of Orkney. It was dismantled by the Earl of Caithness about 1615, having been garrisoned against the government by Robert Stewart, natural son to the Earl of Orkney.

Its ruins afforded a sad subject of contemplation to John, Master of

St. Clair, who, flying from his native country, on account of his share in the insurrection 1715, made some stay at Kirkwall.

"I had occasion to entertain myself at Kirkwall with the melancholy prospect of the ruins of an old castle, the seat of the old Earls of Orkney, my ancestors; and of a more melancholy reflection, of so great and noble an estate as the Orkney and Shetland Isles being taken from one of them by James the Third, for faultrie, after his brother Alexander, Duke of Albany, had married a daughter of my family, and for protecting and defending the said Alexander against the King, who wished to kill him, as he had done his youngest brother, the Earl of Mar; and for which, after the forfaultrie, he *gratefully* divorced my forfaulted ancestor's sister; though I cannot persuade myself that he had any misalliance to plead against a familie in whose veins the blood of Robert Bruce ran as fresh as in his own; for their title to the crowne was by a daughter of David Bruce, son to Robert; and our alliance was by marrying a grandchild of the same Robert Bruce, and daughter to the sister of the same David, out of the familie of Douglass, which at that time did not much sullie the blood, more than my ancestor's having not long before had the honour of marrying a daughter of the King of Denmark's, who was named Florentine, and has left in the town of Kirkwall a noble monument of the grandeur of the times, the finest church ever I saw entire in Scotland."

Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world.—P. 408.

The *jormungandr*, or Snake of the Ocean, whose folds surround the earth, is one of the wildest fictions of the Edda. It was very nearly caught by the god Thor, who went to fish for it with a hook baited with a bull's head. In the battle betwixt the evil demons and the divinities of Odin, which is to precede the *Ragnarockr*, or Twilight of the Gods, this Snake is to act a conspicuous part.

Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell.—P. 408.

These were the *Valcyriur*, or Selectors of the Slain, despatched by Odin from Valhalla, to choose those who were to die, and to distribute the contest. They were well known to the English reader as Gray's Fatal Sisters.

Of Chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold.—P. 408.

The northern warriors were usually entombed with their arms, and their other treasures. Thus, Angantyr, before commencing the duel in which he was slain, stipulated, that if he fell, his sword Tyrfing should be buried with him. His daughter, Hervor, afterwards took it from his tomb. The dialogue which passed betwixt her and Angantyr's spirit on this occasion has been often translated. The whole history may be found in the Hervarar-Saga. Indeed, the ghosts of the northern warriors were not wont tamely to suffer their tombs to be plundered; and hence the mortal heroes had an additional temptation to attempt such adventures; for they held nothing more worthy of their valour than to encounter supernatural beings.—BARTHOLINUS *De causis contemptæ a Danis mortis*, lib. i. cap. 2, 9, 10, 13.

——— *Castle Ravensheuch.*—P. 408.

A large and strong castle, now ruinous, situated betwixt Kirkaldy and Dysart, on a steep crag, washed by the Firth of Forth. It was conferred on Sir William St. Clair as a slight compensation for the earldom of Orkney, by a charter of King James III. dated in 1471, and is now the property of Sir James St. Clair Erskine (now Earl of Rosslyn), representative of the family. It was long a principal residence of the Barons of Roslin.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.—P. 409.

The beautiful chapel of Roslin is still in tolerable preservation. It was founded in 1446, by William St. Clair, Prince of Orkney, Duke of Oldenburgh, Earl of Caithness and Stratherne, Lord St. Clair, Lord Niddesdale, Lord Admiral of the Scottish Seas, Lord Chief Justice of Scotland, Lord Warden of the three Marches, Baron of Roslin, Pentland, Pentland Moor, etc., Knight of the Cockle, and of the Garter (as is affirmed), High Chancellor, Chamberlain, and Lieutenant of Scotland. This lofty person, whose titles, says Godscroft, might weary a Spaniard, built the castle of Roslin, where he resided in princely splendour, and founded the chapel, which is in the most rich and florid style of Gothic architecture.

For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
Like him of whom the story ran,
Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.—P. 411.

The ancient castle of Peel-town, in the Isle of Man, is surrounded by four churches, now ruinous. Through one of these chapels there was formerly a passage from the guard-room of the garrison. This was closed, it is said, upon the following occasion: "They say that an apparition, called, in the Mankish language, the *Mauthe Doog*, in the shape of a large black spaniel, with curled shaggy hair, was used to haunt Peel-castle, but particularly the guard-chamber, where, as soon as candles were lighted, it came and lay down before the fire, in presence of all the soldiers, who, at length, lost great part of the terror they were seized with at its first appearance. But though they endured the shock of such a guest when altogether in a body, none cared to be left alone with it. It being the custom, therefore, for one of the soldiers to lock the gates of the castle at a certain hour, and carry the keys to the captain, to whose apartment the way led through the church, they agreed that whoever was to succeed the ensuing night his fellow in this errand, should accompany him that went first, and by this means no man would be exposed singly to the danger; for the *Mauthe Doog* was always seen to come out from that passage at the close of the day, and return to it again as soon as the morning dawned.

"One night a fellow being drunk, and by the strength of his liquor rendered more daring than ordinarily, laughed at the simplicity of his companions, and, though it was not his turn to go with the keys, would needs take that office upon him, to testify his courage. All the soldiers endeavoured to dissuade him; but the more they said, the more resolute he seemed, and swore he desired nothing more than that the *Mauthe Doog* would follow him, as it had done the others; for he would try if it were dog or devil. After having talked in a very reprobate manner for some time, he snatched up the keys, and went out of the

guard-room. In some time after his departure, a great noise was heard, but nobody had the boldness to see what occasioned it, till the adventurer returning, they demanded the knowledge of him; but as loud and noisy as he had been at leaving them, he was now become sober and silent enough; for he was never heard to speak more; and though all the time he lived, which was three days, he was entreated by all who came near him, either to speak, or, if he could not do that, to make some signs, by which they might understand what had happened to him, yet nothing intelligible could be got from him, only that, by the distortion of his limbs and features, it might be guessed that he died in agonies more than is common in a natural death.

"The *Mauthe Doog* was, however, never after seen in the castle, nor would any one attempt to go through that passage; for which reason it was closed up, and another way made.—WALDRON'S *Description of the Isle of Man*, p. 107.

——— *St. Bride of Douglas.*—P. 411.

This was a favourite saint of the house of Douglas, and of the Earl of Angus in particular, as we learn from the following passage:—"The Queen-regent had proposed to raise a rival noble to the ducal dignity; and discoursing of her purpose with Angus, he answered, 'Why not, madam? we are happy that have such a princess, that can know and will acknowledge men's services, and is willing to recompense it, but, by the might of God' (this was his oath when he was serious and in anger; at other times, it was by St. Bryde of Douglas), 'if he be a Duke, I will be a Drake!'—So she desisted from prosecuting of that purpose."—GODSCROFT, vol. ii. p. 131.

MARMION

The Chapel Perilous.—P. 420.

See in the *Morte d'Arthur* of Malory the tale of the Chapel Perilous, and the quest of Sir Launcelot after the Sangreal.

The Sangreal's holy quest.—P. 420.

One day, when Arthur was holding a high feast with his Knights of the Round Table, the Sangreal, or vessel out of which the last passover was eaten (a precious relic, which had long remained concealed from human eyes, because of the sins of the land) suddenly appeared to him and all his chivalry. The consequence of this vision was, that all the knights took on them a solemn vow to seek the Sangreal. But, alas! it could only be revealed to a knight at once accomplished in earthly chivalry and pure and guiltless of evil conversation. All Sir Launcelot's noble accomplishments were therefore rendered vain by his guilty intrigue with Queen Guenever, or Ganore.—*Morte d'Arthur.*

And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again.—P. 420.

Dryden's melancholy account of his projected epic poem, blasted by the selfish and sordid parsimony of his patrons, is contained in an "Essay on Satire," addressed to the Earl of Dorset, and prefixed to the Translation of Juvenal.

Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold.—P. 421.

The "History of Bevis of Hampton" is abridged by my friend Mr. George Ellis, with that liveliness which extracts amusement even out of the most rude and unpromising of our old tales of chivalry. Ascapart, a most important personage in the romance, is thus described in an extract:—

"This geaunt was mighty and strong,
And full thirty foot was long,
He was bristled like a sow;
A foot he had between each brow;
His lips were great, and hung aside;
His eyen were hollow, his mouth was wide;
Lothly he was to look on than,
And liker a devil than a man.
His staff was a young oak,
Hard and heavy was his stroke."
Specimens of Metrical Romances, vol. ii. p. 136.

I am happy to say, that the memory of Sir Bevis is still fragrant in his town of Southampton; the gate of which is sentinelled by the effigies of that doughty knight-errant and his gigantic associate.

Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep, etc.—P. 421.

The ruinous castle of Norham (anciently called Ubbanford) is situated on the southern bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick, and where that river is still the boundary between England and Scotland. The extent of its ruins, as well as its historical importance, shows it to have been a place of magnificence, as well as strength. Edward I. resided there when he was created umpire of the dispute concerning the Scottish succession. It was repeatedly taken and retaken during the wars between England and Scotland; and, indeed, scarce any happened in which it had not a principal share. Norham Castle is situated on a steep bank which overhangs the river.

The battled towers, the donjon keep.—P. 421.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remind my readers, that the *donjon*, in its proper signification, means the strongest part of a feudal castle; a high square tower, with walls of tremendous thickness, situated in the centre of the other buildings, from which, however, it was usually detached. Here, in case of the outward defences being gained, the garrison retreated to make their last stand. The donjon contained the great hall, and principal rooms of state for solemn occasions, and also the prison of the fortress; from which last circumstance we derive the modern and restricted use of the word *dungeon*. Ducange (*voce* DUNJO) conjectures plausibly, that the name is derived from these keeps being usually built upon a hill, which in Celtic is called DUN. Borlase supposes the word came from the darkness of the apartments in these towers, which were thence figuratively called Dungeons; thus deriving the ancient word from the modern application of it.

Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel.—P. 423.

The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury. See the passage in which Froissart gives an account of the

preparations made by Henry, Earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV., and Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marischal, for their proposed combat in the lists at Coventry.—JOHNES' *Froissart*, vol. iv. p. 597.

Who checks at me, to death is dight.—P. 423.

The crest and motto of Marmion are borrowed from the following story:—Sir David de Lindsay, first Earl of Crauford, was, among other gentlemen of quality, attended, during a visit to London, in 1390, by Sir William Dalzell, who was, according to my authority, Bower, not only excelling in wisdom, but also of a lively wit. Chancing to be at the court, he there saw Sir Piers Courtenay, an English knight, famous for skill in tilting, and for the beauty of his person, parading the palace, arrayed in a new mantle, bearing for device an embroidered falcon, with this rhyme—

> "I bear a falcon, fairest of flight,
> Whoso pinches at her, his death is dight [1]
> In graith." [2]

The Scottish knight, being a wag, appeared next day in a dress exactly similar to that of Courtenay, but bearing a magpie instead of the falcon, with a motto ingeniously contrived to rhyme to the vaunting inscription of Sir Piers—

> "I bear a pie picking at a piece,
> Whoso picks at her, I shall pick at his nese,[3]
> In faith."

This affront could only be expiated by a just with sharp lances. In the course, Dalzell left his helmet unlaced, so that it gave way at the touch of his antagonist's lance, and he thus avoided the shock of the encounter. This happened twice:—in the third encounter, the handsome Courtenay lost two of his front teeth. As the Englishman complained bitterly of Dalzell's fraud in not fastening his helmet, the Scottishman agreed to run six courses more, each champion staking in the hand of the King two hundred pounds, to be forfeited if, on entering the lists, any unequal advantage should be detected. This being agreed to, the wily Scot demanded that Sir Piers, in addition to the loss of his teeth, should consent to the extinction of one of his eyes, he himself having lost an eye in the fight of Otterburn. As Courtenay demurred, Dalzell demanded the forfeit; which, after much altercation, the King appointed to be paid to him, saying, he surpassed the English both in wit and valour.

They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye.—P. 425.

Lord Marmion, the principal character of the present romance, is entirely a fictitious personage. In earlier times, indeed, the family of Marmion, Lords of Fontenay, in Normandy, was highly distinguished. Robert de Marmion, Lord of Fontenay, a distinguished follower of the Conqueror, obtained a grant of the castle and town of Tamworth, and also of the manor of Scrivelby, in Lincolnshire. One, or both, of these noble possessions, was held by the honourable service of being the royal champion, as the ancestors of Marmion had formerly been to the Dukes of Normandy. But after the castle and demesne of Tamworth had passed through four successive barons from Robert, the family became extinct in the person of Philip de Marmion, who died in 20th Edward I. without issue male.

[1] Prepared. [2] Armour. [3] Nose.

——— *Largesse, largesse.*—P. 425.

This was the cry with which heralds and pursuivants were wont to acknowledge the bounty received from the knights. Stewart of Lorn distinguishes a ballad in which he satirises the narrowness of James V. and his courtiers, by the ironical burden—

> "*Lerges, lerges, lerges, hay,*
> *Lerges of this new-yeir day.*
> First lerges of the King, my chief,
> Quhilk come als quiet as a theif,
> And in my hand slid schillingis tway,[1]
> To put his lergnes to the prief,[2]
> For lerges of this new-yeir day."

Sir Hugh the Heron bold.—P. 425.

Were accuracy of any consequence in a fictitious narrative, this castellan's name ought to have been William; for William Heron of Ford was husband to the famous Lady Ford, whose siren charms are said to have cost our James IV. so dear. Moreover, the said William Heron was, at the time supposed, a prisoner in Scotland, being surrendered by Henry VIII., on account of his share in the slaughter of Sir Robert Ker of Cessford. His wife, represented in the text as residing at the Court of Scotland, was, in fact, living in her own Castle at Ford.—See Sir RICHARD HERON'S curious *Genealogy of the Heron Family*.

"*How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all,*" *etc.*—P. 426.

This old Northumbrian ballad was taken down from the recitation of a woman of eighty years of age, mother of one of the miners of Alston Moor, by an agent for the lead mines there, who communicated it to my friend and correspondent, R. Surtees, Esquire, of Mainsforth. She had not, she said, heard it for many years; but, when she was a girl, it used to be sung at the merry-makings "till the roof rung again."

Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit.—P. 428.

The story of Perkin Warbeck, or Richard, Duke of York, is well known. In 1496, he was received honourably in Scotland; and James IV., after conferring upon him in marriage his own relation, the Lady Catharine Gordon, made war on England in behalf of his pretensions. To retaliate an invasion of England, Surrey advanced into Berwickshire at the head of considerable forces, but retreated, after taking the inconsiderable fortress of Ayton.

Norham can find you guides enow.—P. 428.

The garrisons of the English castles of Wark, Norham, and Berwick, were, as may be easily supposed, very troublesome neighbours to Scotland. Sir Richard Maitland of Ledington wrote a poem, called "The Blind Baron's Comfort;" when his barony of Blythe, in Lauderdale, was *harried* by Rowland Foster, the English captain of Wark, with his company, to the number of 300 men. They spoiled the poetical knight of 5000 sheep, 200 nolt, 30 horses and mares; the whole furniture of his house of Blythe, worth 100 pounds Scots, (£8 6s. 8d.), and everything else that was portable.

[1] Two. [2] Proof.

Saint Rosalie retired to God.—P. 430.

"Sante Rosalia was of Palermo, and born of a very noble family, and, when very young, abhorred so much the vanities of this world, and avoided the converse of mankind, resolving to dedicate herself wholly to God Almighty, that she, by divine inspiration, forsook her father's house, and never was more heard of till her body was found in that cleft of a rock, on that almost inaccessible mountain, where now the chapel is built; and they affirm she was carried up there by the hands of angels; for that place was not formerly so accessible (as now it is) in the days of the Saint; and even now it is a very bad, and steepy, and breakneck way."—*Voyage to Sicily and Malta*, by Mr. John Dryden (son to the poet), p. 107.

The summon'd Palmer came in place.—P. 431.

A *Palmer*, opposed to a *Pilgrim*, was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting by charity: whereas the Pilgrim retired to his usual home and occupations, when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage. The Palmers seem to have been the *Questionarii* of the ancient Scottish canons 1242 and 1296. There is in the Bannatyne MS. a burlesque account of two such persons, entitled, "Simmy and his brother." Their accountrements are thus ludicrously described (I discard the ancient spelling)—

"Syne shaped them up, to loup on leas,
Two tabards of the tartan;
They counted nought what their clouts were
When sew'd them on, in certain.
Syne clampit up St. Peter's keys,
Made of an old red gartane;
St. James's shells, on t'other side, shows
As pretty as a partane
Toe,
On Symmye and his brother."

To fair St. Andrews bound.—P. 432.

St. Regulus (*Scotticé*, St. Rule), a monk of Patræ, in Achaia, warned by a vision, is said, A.D. 370, to have sailed westward, until he landed at St. Andrews in Scotland, where he founded a chapel and tower. The latter is still standing; and, though we may doubt the precise date of its foundation, is certainly one of the most ancient edifices in Scotland.

——— *Saint Fillan's blessed well,*
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore.—P. 432.

St. Fillan was a Scottish saint of some reputation. Although Popery is, with us, matter of abomination, yet the common people still retain some of the superstitions connected with it. There are in Perthshire several wells and springs dedicated to St. Fillan, which are still places of pilgrimage and offerings, even among the Protestants. They are held powerful in cases of madness; and, in some of very late occurrence, lunatics have been left all night bound to the holy stone, in confidence that the saint would cure and unloose them before morning.—[See various notes to the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.]

Where flourish'd once a forest fair.—P. 433.

Ettrick Forest, now a range of mountainous sheep-walks, was anciently reserved for the pleasure of the royal chase. Since it was disparked, the wood has been, by degrees, almost totally destroyed, although, wherever protected from the sheep, copses soon arise without any planting. When the King hunted there, he often summoned the array of the country to meet and assist his sport.

By lone Saint Mary's silent lake.—P. 436.

This beautiful sheet of water forms the reservoir from which the Yarrow takes its source. It is connected with a smaller lake, called the Loch of the Lowes, and surrounded by mountains. In the winter, it is still frequented by flights of wild swans; hence my friend Mr. Wordsworth's lines:—

> "The swan on sweet St. Mary's lake
> Floats double, swan and shadow."

Near the lower extremity of the lake, are the ruins of Dryhope tower, the birth-place of Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and famous by the traditional name of the Flower of Yarrow. She was married to Walter Scott of Harden, no less renowned for his depredations, than his bride for her beauty. Her romantic appellation was, in later days, with equal justice, conferred on Miss Mary Lilias Scott, the last of the elder branch of the Harden family. The author well remembers the talent and spirit of the latter Flower of Yarrow, though age had then injured the charms which procured her the name. The words usually sung to the air of "Tweedside," beginning, "What beauties does Flora disclose," were composed in her honour.

Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low.—P. 437.

The chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes (*de lacuous*) was situated on the eastern side of the lake, to which it gives name. It was injured by the clan of Scott, in a feud with the Cranstouns; but continued to be a place of worship during the seventeenth century. The vestiges of the building can now scarcely be traced; but the burial ground is still used as a cemetery. A funeral, in a spot so very retired, has an uncommonly striking effect. The vestiges of the chaplain's house are yet visible. Being in a high situation, it commanded a full view of the lake, with the opposite mountain of Bourhope, belonging, with the lake itself, to Lord Napier. On the left hand is the tower of Dryhope, mentioned in a preceding note.

——— *the Wizard's grave.*—P. 438.

At one corner of the burial ground of the demolished chapel, but without its precincts, is a small mound called *Binram's Corse*, where tradition deposits the remains of a necromantic priest, the former tenant of the chaplainry. His story much resembles that of Ambrosio in "The Monk," and has been made the theme of a ballad, by my friend Mr. James Hogg, more poetically designed *the Ettrick Shepherd*. To his volume, entitled "The Mountain Bard," which contains this, and many other legendary stories and ballads of great merit, I refer the curious reader.

Dark Loch Skene.—P. 438.

Loch Skene is a mountain lake, of considerable size, at the head of Moffat Water. The character of the scenery is uncommonly savage; and the earn, or Scottish eagle, has, for many ages, built its nest yearly upon an islet in the lake. Loch Skene discharges itself into a brook, which, after a short and precipitate course, falls from a cataract of immense height, and gloomy grandeur, called, from its appearance, the "Grey Mare's Tail." The "Giant's Grave," afterwards mentioned, is a sort of trench, which bears that name, a little way from the foot of the cataract. It has the appearance of a battery, designed to command the pass.

——— *high Whitby's cloister'd pile.*—P. 439.

The Abbey of Whitby, in the Archdeaconry of Cleaveland, on the coast of Yorkshire, was founded A.D. 657, in consequence of a vow of Oswy, King of Northumberland. It contained both monks and nuns of the Benedictine order; but, contrary to what was usual in such establishments, the abbess was superior to the abbot. The monastery was afterwards ruined by the Danes, and rebuilt by William Percy, in the reign of the Conqueror. There were no nuns there in Henry the Eighth's time, nor long before it. The ruins of Whitby Abbey are very magnificent.

——— *St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle.*—P. 439.

Lindisfarne, an isle on the coast of Northumberland, was called Holy Island, from the sanctity of its ancient monastery, and from its having been the episcopal seat of the see of Durham during the early ages of British Christianity. A succession of holy men held that office; but their merits were swallowed up in the superior fame of St. Cuthbert, who was sixth Bishop of Durham, and who bestowed the name of his "patrimony" upon the extensive property of the see. The ruins of the monastery upon Holy Island betoken great antiquity. The arches are, in general, strictly Saxon; and the pillars which support them, short, strong, and massy. In some places, however, there are pointed windows, which indicate that the building has been repaired at a period long subsequent to the original foundation. The exterior ornaments of the building, being of a light sandy stone, have been wasted, as described in the text. Lindisfarne is not properly an island, but rather, as the venerable Bede has termed it, a semi-isle; for, although surrounded by the sea at full tide, the ebb leaves the sands dry between it and the opposite coast of Northumberland, from which it is about three miles distant.

The lovely Edelfled.—P. 444.

The daughter of King Oswy, who, in gratitude to Heaven for the great victory which he won in 655, against Penda, the Pagan King of Mercia, dedicated Edelfleda, then but a year old, to the service of God, in the monastery of Whitby, of which St. Hilda was then abbess. She afterwards adorned the place of her education with great magnificence.

When holy Hilda pray'd.—P. 444.

These two miracles are much insisted upon by all ancient writers who have occasion to mention either Whitby or St. Hilda. The relics of the snakes which infested the precincts of the convent, and were,

at the abbess's prayer, not only beheaded, but petrified, are still found about the rocks, and are termed by Protestant fossilists, *Ammonitæ*.

The other miracle is thus mentioned by Camden: "It is also ascribed to the power of her sanctity, that these wild geese, which, in the winter, fly in great flocks to the lakes and rivers unfrozen in the southern parts, to the great amazement of every one, fall down suddenly upon the ground when they are in their flight over certain neighbouring fields hereabouts: a relation I should not have made, if I had not received it from several credible men."

Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir, etc.—P. 445.

Every one has heard, that when David I., with his son Henry, invaded Northumberland in 1136, the English host marched against them under the holy banner of St. Cuthbert; to the efficacy of which was imputed the great victory which they obtained in the bloody battle of Northallerton, or Cutonmoor. The conquerors were at least as much indebted to the jealousy and intractability of the different tribes who composed David's army; among whom, as mentioned in the text, were the Galwegians, the Britons of Strath-Clyde, the men of Teviotdale and Lothian, with many Norman and German warriors, who asserted the cause of the Empress Maud. See CHALMERS' *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 622; a most laborious, curious, and interesting publication, from which considerable defects of style and manner ought not to turn aside the Scottish antiquary.

'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane.—P. 445.

Cuthbert had no great reason to spare the Danes. I find, in Simeon of Durham, that the Saint appeared in a vision to Alfred, when lurking in the marshes of Glastonbury, and promised him assistance and victory over his heathen enemies; a consolation, which, as was reasonable, Alfred, after the victory of Ashendown, rewarded by a royal offering at the shrine of the Saint. As to William the Conqueror, the terror spread before his army, when he marched to punish the revolt of the Northumbrians, in 1096, had forced the monks to fly once more to Holy Island with the body of the Saint. It was, however, replaced before William left the north; and, to balance accounts, the Conqueror having intimated an indiscreet curiosity to view the Saint's body, he was, while in the act of commanding the shrine to be opened, seized with heat and sickness, accompanied with such a panic terror, that, notwithstanding there was a sumptuous dinner prepared for him, he fled without eating a morsel (which the monkish historian seems to have thought no small part both of the miracle and the penance), and never drew his bridle till he got to the river Tees.

Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name.—P. 445.

Although we do not learn that Cuthbert was, during his life, such an artificer as Dunstan, his brother in sanctity, yet, since his death, he has acquired the reputation of forging those *Entrochi* which are found among the rocks of Holy Island, and pass there by the name of St. Cuthbert's Beads. While at this task, he is supposed to sit during the night upon a certain rock, and use another as his anvil. This story was perhaps credited in former days; at least the Saint's legend contains some not more probable.

Old Colwulf.—P. 446.

Ceolwulf, or Colwulf, King of Northumberland, flourished in the eighth century. He was a man of some learning; for the venerable Bede dedicates to him his "Ecclesiastical History." He abdicated the throne about 738, and retired to Holy Island, where he died in the odour of sanctity. Saint as Colwulf was, however, I fear the foundation of the penance vault does not correspond with his character; for it is recorded among his *memorabilia*, that, finding the air of the island raw and cold, he indulged the monks, whose rule had hitherto confined them to milk or water, with the comfortable privilege of using wine or ale. If any rigid antiquary insists on this objection, he is welcome to suppose the penance-vault was intended, by the founder, for the more genial purposes of a cellar.

Tynemouth's haughty Prioress.—P. 447.

That there was an ancient priory at Tynemouth is certain. Its ruins are situated on a high rocky point; and, doubtless, many a vow was made to the shrine by the distressed mariners who drove towards the iron-bound coast of Northumberland in stormy weather. It was anciently a nunnery; for Virca, abbess of Tynemouth, presented St. Cuthbert (yet alive) with a rare winding-sheet, in emulation of a holy lady called Tuda, who had sent him a coffin: But, as in the case of Whitby and of Holy Island, the introduction of nuns at Tynemouth in the reign of Henry VIII. is an anachronism. The nunnery at Holy Island is altogether fictitious. Indeed, St. Cuthbert was unlikely to permit such an establishment; for, notwithstanding his accepting the mortuary gifts above mentioned, and his carrying on a visiting acquaintance with the Abbess of Coldingham, he certainly hated the whole female sex; and, in revenge of a slippery trick played to him by an Irish princess, he, after death, inflicted severe penances on such as presumed to approach within a certain distance of his shrine.

On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb.—P. 449.

It is well known, that the religious, who broke their vows of chastity, were subjected to the same penalty as the Roman vestals in a similar case. A small niche, sufficient to enclose their bodies, was made in the massive wall of the convent; a slender pittance of food and water was deposited in it, and the awful words, VADE IN PACE, were the signal for immuring the criminal. It is not likely that, in latter times, this punishment was often resorted to; but, among the ruins of the Abbey of Coldingham, were some years ago discovered the remains of a female skeleton, which, from the shape of the niche and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun.

The village inn.—P. 459.

The accommodations of a Scottish hostelrie, or inn, in the sixteenth century, may be collected from Dunbar's admirable tale of "The Friars of Berwick." Simon Lawder, "the gay ostlier," seems to have lived very comfortably; and his wife decorated her person with a scarlet kirtle, and a belt of silk and silver, and rings upon her fingers; and feasted her paramour with rabbits, capons, partridges, and Bourdeaux wine.

The death of a dear friend.—P. 463.

Among other omens to which faithful credit is given among the Scottish peasantry, is what is called the "dead-bell," explained by my friend James Hogg, to be that tinkling in the ears which the country people regard as the secret intelligence of some friend's decease. He tells a story much to the purpose in his "Mountain Bard."

The Goblin-Hall.—P. 465.

A vaulted hall under the ancient castle of Gifford or Yester (for it bears either name indifferently), the construction of which has from a very remote period been ascribed to magic. The statistical Account of the Parish of Garvald and Baro gives the following account of the present state of this castle and apartment:—"Upon a peninsula, formed by the water of Hopes on the east, and a large rivulet on the west, stands the ancient castle of Yester. Sir David Dalrymple, in his Annals, relates, that 'Hugh Gifford de Yester died in 1267; that in his castle there was a capacious cavern, formed by magical art, and called in the country Bo-Hall, *i.e.*, Hobgoblin Hall.' A stair of twenty-four steps led down to this apartment, which is a large and spacious hall, with an arched roof; and though it hath stood for so many centuries, and been exposed to the external air for a period of fifty or sixty years, it is still as firm and entire as if it had only stood a few years. From the floor of this hall, another stair of thirty-six steps leads down to a pit which hath a communication with Hopes Water. A great part of the walls of this large and ancient castle are still standing. There is a tradition, that the castle of Yester was the last fortification, in this country, that surrendered to General Gray, sent into Scotland by Protector Somerset."

There floated Haco's banner trim.—P. 466.

In 1263, Haco, King of Norway, came into the Firth of Clyde with a powerful armament, and made a descent at Largs, in Ayrshire. Here he was encountered and defeated, on the 2nd October, by Alexander III. Haco retreated to Orkney, where he died soon after this disgrace to his arms. There are still existing, near the place of battle, many barrows, some of which, having been opened, were found, as usual, to contain bones and urns.

The wizard habit strange.—P. 466.

"Magicians, as is well known, were very curious in the choice and form of their vestments. Their caps are oval, or like pyramids, with lappets on each side, and fur within. Their gowns are long, and furred with fox-skins, under which they have a linen garment reaching to the knee. Their girdles are three inches broad, and have many cabalistical names, with crosses, trines, and circles inscribed on them. Their shoes should be of new russet leather, with a cross cut upon them. Their knives are dagger-fashion; and their swords have neither guard nor scabbard."—See these, and many other particulars, in the Discourse concerning Devils and Spirits, annexed to REGINALD SCOTT'S *Discovery of Witchcraft*, edition 1665.

Upon his breast a pentacle.—P. 466.

"A pentacle is a piece of fine linen, folded with five corners, according to the five senses, and suitably inscribed with characters. This the

magician extends towards the spirits which he invokes, when they are stubborn and rebellious, and refuse to be conformable unto the ceremonies and rites of magic."—See the Discourses, etc., above mentioned, p. 66.

As born upon that blessed night.—p. 467.

It is a popular article of faith, that those who are born on Christmas, or Good Friday, have the power of seeing spirits, and even of commanding them. The Spaniards imputed the haggard and downcast looks of their Philip II. to the disagreeable visions to which this privilege subjected him.

The Elfin warrior.—P. 469.

See the Essay upon Fairy Superstitions in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii.

——— *Forbes.*—P. 474.

Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet; unequalled, perhaps, in the degree of individual affection entertained for him by his friends, as well as in the general respect and esteem of Scotland at large. His *Life of Beattie*, whom he befriended and patronised in life, as well as celebrated after his decease, was not long published before the benevolent and affectionate biographer was called to follow the subject of his narrative. This melancholy event very shortly succeeded the marriage of the friend, to whom this introduction is addressed, with one of Sir William's daughters.

Friar Rush.—P. 477.

Alias "Will o' the Wisp." This personage is a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who, once upon a time, got admittance into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks. He was also a sort of Robin Goodfellow, and Jack o' Lanthern. It is in allusion to this mischievous demon that Milton's clown speaks—

> "She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
> And he by *Friar's lanthern* led."

Sir David Lindesay of the Mount.—p. 480.

Sir David Lindesay was well known for his early efforts in favour of the Reformed doctrines; and his play, coarse as it now seems, must have had a powerful effect upon the people of his age. I am uncertain if I abuse poetical licence by introducing Sir David Lindesay in the character of Lion-Herald, sixteen years before he obtained that office. At any rate, I am not the first who has been guilty of the anachronism; for the author of *Flodden Field* despatches *Dallamount*, which can mean nobody but Sir David de la Mont, to France, on the message of defiance from James IV. to Henry VIII. It was often an office imposed on the Lion King-at-arms, to receive foreign ambassadors; and Lindesay himself did this honour to Sir Ralph Sadler, in 1539-40. Indeed, the oath of the Lion, in its first article, bears reference to his frequent employment upon royal messages and embassies.

Crichtoun Castle.—P. 480.

A large ruinous castle on the banks of the Tyne, about ten miles from Edinburgh. As indicated in the text, it was built at different times,

and with a very differing regard to splendour and accommodation. The oldest part of the building is a narrow keep, or tower, such as formed the mansion of a lesser Scottish baron; but so many additions have been made to it, that there is now a large court-yard, surrounded by buildings of different ages. The eastern front of the court is raised above a portico, and decorated with entablatures, bearing anchors. All the stones of this front are cut into diamond facets, the angular projections of which have an uncommonly rich appearance. The inside of this part of the building appears to have contained a gallery of great length, and uncommon elegance. Access was given to it by a magnificent staircase, now quite destroyed. The soffits are ornamented with twining cordage and rosettes; and the whole seems to have been far more splendid than was usual in Scottish castles. The castle belonged originally to the Chancellor, Sir William Crichton, and probably owed to him its first enlargement, as well as its being taken by the Earl of Douglas, who imputed to Crichton's counsels the death of his predecessor, Earl William, beheaded in Edinburgh Castle, with his brother, in 1440. It is said to have been totally demolished on that occasion; but the present state of the ruin shows the contrary. In 1483, it was garrisoned by Lord Crichton, then its proprietor, against King James III., whose displeasure he had incurred by seducing his sister Margaret, in revenge, it is said, for the Monarch having dishonoured his bed. From the Crichton family the castle passed to that of the Hepburns, Earls Bothwell; and when the forfeitures of Stewart, the last Earl Bothwell, were divided, the barony and castle of Crichton fell to the share of the Earl of Buccleuch. They were afterwards the property of the Pringles of Clifton and of Sir John Callander, Baronet.

Earl Adam Hepburn.—P. 482.

He was the second Earl of Bothwell, and fell in the field of Flodden, where, according to an ancient English poet, he distinguished himself by a furious attempt to retrieve the day. He was grandfather to James, Earl of Bothwell, too well known in the history of Queen Mary.

The wild-buck bells.—P. 483.

I am glad of an opportunity to describe the cry of the deer by another word than *braying*, although the latter has been sanctified by the use of the Scottish metrical translation of the Psalms. *Bell* seems to be an abbreviation of bellow. This sylvan sound conveyed great delight to our ancestors, chiefly, I suppose, from association. A gentle knight in the reign of Henry VIII., Sir Thomas Wortley, built Wantley Lodge, in Wancliffe Forest, for the pleasure (as an ancient inscription testifies) of "listening to the hart's *bell*."

June saw his father's overthrow.—P. 483.

The rebellion against James III. was signalised by the cruel circumstance of his son's presence in the hostile army. When the King saw his own banner displayed against him, and his son in the faction of his enemies, he lost the little courage he had ever possessed, fled out of the field, fell from his horse as it started at a woman and water-pitcher, and was slain, it is not well understood by whom. James IV., after the battle, passed to Stirling, and hearing the monks of the chapel-royal deploring the death of his father, their founder, he was seized with deep remorse, which manifested itself in severe penances. The battle of Sauchie-burn, in which James III. fell, was fought 18th June, 1488.

The Borough-moor.—P. 487.

The Borough, or Common Moor of Edinburgh, was of very great extent, reaching from the southern walls of the city to the bottom of Braid Hills. It was anciently a forest; and, in that state, was so great a nuisance, that the inhabitants of Edinburgh had permission granted to them of building wooden galleries, projecting over the street, in order to encourage them to consume the timber, which they seem to have done very effectually. When James IV. mustered the array of the kingdom there, in 1513, the Borough-moor was, according to Hawthornden, "a field spacious, and delightful by the shade of many stately and aged oaks." Upon that, and similar occasions, the royal standard is traditionally said to have been displayed from the Hare-Stane, a high stone, now built into the wall, on the left hand of the high-way leading towards Braid, not far from the head of Burntsfield Links. The Hare-Stane probably derives its name from the British word *Har*, signifying an army.

The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.—P. 489.

The well-known arms of Scotland. If you will believe Boethius and Buchanan, the double tressure round the shield, mentioned, *counter fleur-de-lysed or lingued and armed azure*, was first assumed by Echaius, King of Scotland, contemporary of Charlemagne, and founder of the celebrated League with France; but later antiquaries make poor Eochy, or Achy, little better than a sort of King of Brentford, whom old Grig (who has also swelled into Gregorius Magnus) associated with himself in the important duty of governing some part of the north-eastern coast of Scotland.

——— *Caledonia's Queen is changed.*—P. 492.

The Old Town of Edinburgh was secured on the north side by a lake, now drained, and on the south by a wall, which there was some attempt to make defensible even so late as 1745. The gates, and the greater part of the wall, have been pulled down, in the course of the late extensive and beautiful enlargement of the city. My ingenious and valued friend, Mr. Thomas Campbell, proposed to celebrate Edinburgh under the epithet here borrowed. But the "Queen of the North" has not been so fortunate as to receive from so eminent a pen the proposed distinction.

Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose.—P. 494.

Henry VI., with his Queen, his heir, and the chiefs of his family, fled to Scotland after the fatal battle of Towton. In this note a doubt was formerly expressed whether Henry VI. came to Edinburgh, though his Queen certainly did; Mr. Pinkerton inclining to believe that he remained at Kirkcudbright. But my noble friend, Lord Napier, has pointed out to me a grant by Henry of an annuity of forty marks to his Lordship's ancestor, John Napier, subscribed by the King himself, *at Edinburgh*, the 28th day of August, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, which corresponds to the year of God, 1461.

The cloth-yard arrows.—P. 496.

This is no poetical exaggeration. In some of the counties of England, distinguished for archery, shafts of this extraordinary length were

actually used. Thus, at the battle of Blackheath, between the troops of Henry VII., and the Cornish insurgents, in 1496, the bridge of Dartford was defended by a picked band of archers from the rebel army, "whose arrows," says Hollinshed, "were in length a full cloth yard." The Scottish, according to Ascham, had a proverb, that every English archer carried under his belt twenty-four Scots, in allusion to his bundle of unerring shafts.

He saw the hardy burghers there.—P. 496.

The Scottish burgesses were, like yeomen, appointed to be armed with bows and sheaves, sword, buckler, knife, spear, or a good axe instead of a bow, if worth £100: their armour to be of white or bright harness. They wore *white hats, i.e.* bright steel caps, without crest or visor. By an act of James IV. their *weapon-schawings* are appointed to be held four times a-year, under the aldermen or bailiffs.

On foot the yeoman too——
Each at his back (a slender store)
His forty days' provision bore,
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear.—P. 496.

Bows and quivers were in vain recommended to the peasantry of Scotland by repeated statutes; spears and axes seem universally to have been used instead of them. Their defensive armour was the plate jack, hauberk, or brigantine; and their missile weapons crossbows and culverins. All wore swords of excellent temper, according to Patten; and a voluminous handkerchief round their neck, "not for cold, but for cutting." The mace also was much used in the Scottish army: The old poem on the battle of Flodden mentions a band—

"Who manfully did meet their foes,
With leaden mauls, and lances long."

A banquet rich, and costly wines.—P. 499.

In all transactions of great or petty importance, and among whomsoever taking place, it would seem that a present of wine was a uniform and indispensable preliminary. It was not to Sir John Falstaff alone that such an introductory preface was necessary, however well judged and acceptable on the part of Mr. Brook; for Sir Ralph Sadler, while on an embassy to Scotland in 1539-40, mentions, with complacency, "the same night came Rothesay (the herald so called) to me again, and brought me wine from the King, both white and red."—*Clifford's Edition*, p. 39.

——— *his iron belt.*—P. 501.

Few readers need to be reminded of this belt, to the weight of which James added certain ounces every year that he lived. Pitscottie founds his belief that James was not slain in the battle of Flodden, because the English never had this token of the iron-belt to show to any Scottishman.

Sir Hugh the Heron's wife.—P. 501.

It has been already noticed that King James's acquaintance with Lady Heron of Ford did not commence until he marched into England. Our historians impute to the King's infatuated passion the delays which led to the fatal defeat of Flodden. The author of *The Genealogy of the Heron Family* endeavours, with laudable anxiety, to clear the Lady Ford from this scandal: that she came and went, however, between the armies of James and Surrey, is certain.

Sent him a turquois ring and glove.—P. 501.

"Also the Queen of France wrote a love-letter to the King of Scotland, calling him her love, showing him that she had suffered much rebuke in France for the defending of his honour. She believed surely that he would recompense her again with some of his kingly support in her necessity; that is to say, that he would raise her an army, and come three foot of ground on English ground, for her sake. To that effect she sent him a ring off her finger, with fourteen thousand French crowns to pay his expenses." PITSCOTTIE, p. 110.—A turquois ring, probably this fatal gift, is, with James's sword and dagger, preserved in the College of Heralds, London.

Archibald Bell-the-Cat.—P. 504.

Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, a man remarkable for strength of body and mind, acquired the popular name of *Bell-the-Cat* upon the following remarkable occasion:—James the Third, of whom Pitscottie complains that he delighted more in music, and "policies of building," than in hunting, hawking, and other noble exercises, was so ill advised as to make favourites of his architects and musicians, whom the same historian irreverently terms masons and fiddlers. His nobility, who did not sympathise in the King's respect for the fine arts, were extremely incensed at the honours conferred on those persons, particularly on Cochrane, a mason, who had been created Earl of Mar; and, seizing the opportunity, when, in 1482, the King had convoked the whole array of the country to march against the English, they held a midnight council in the church of Lauder, for the purpose of forcibly removing these minions from the King's person. When all had agreed on the propriety of this measure, Lord Gray told the assembly the apologue of the Mice, who had formed a resolution that it would be highly advantageous to their community to tie a bell round the cat's neck, that they might hear her approach at a distance; but which public measure unfortunately miscarried, from no mouse being willing to undertake the task of fastening the bell. "I understand the moral," said Angus, "and, that what we propose may not lack execution, I will *bell-the-cat*." [The rest of the scene is told by Pitscottie.]

Against the war had Angus stood.—P. 505.

Angus was an old man when the war against England was resolved upon. He earnestly spoke against that measure from its commencement; and, on the eve of the battle of Flodden, remonstrated so freely upon the impolicy of fighting, that the King said to him, with scorn and indignation, "if he was afraid he might go home." The Earl burst into tears at this insupportable insult, and retired accordingly, leaving his sons George, Master of Angus, and Sir William of Glenbervie, to command his followers. They were both slain in the battle, with two hundred gentlemen of the name of Douglas. The aged Earl, broken-hearted at the calamities of his house and his country, retired into a religious house, where he died about a year after the field of Flodden.

Tantallon hold.—P. 505.

The ruins of Tantallon Castle occupy a high rock projecting into the German Ocean, about two miles east of North Berwick. The building is not seen till a close approach, as there is rising ground betwixt it and the land. The circuit is of large extent, fenced upon three sides by the precipice which overhangs the sea, and on the fourth by a double ditch

and very strong outworks. Tantallon was a principal castle of the Douglas family, and when the Earl of Angus was banished, in 1527, it continued to hold out against James V. The King went in person against it, and for its reduction borrowed from the Castle of Dunbar, then belonging to the Duke of Albany, two great cannons, whose names, as Pitscottie informs us with laudable minuteness, were "Thrawn-mouth'd Meg and her Marrow;" also, "two great botcards, and two moyan, two double falcons, and four quarter falcons;" for the safe guiding and re-delivery of which three lords were laid in pawn at Dunbar. Yet, notwithstanding all this apparatus, James was forced to raise the siege, and only afterwards obtained possession of Tantallon by treaty with the governor, Simon Panango.

Their motto on his blade.—P. 505.

A very ancient sword, in possession of Lord Douglas, bears, among a great deal of flourishing, two hands pointing to a heart, which is placed betwixt them, and the date 1329, being the year in which Bruce charged the Good Lord Douglas to carry his heart to the Holy Land. The following lines (the first couplet of which is quoted by Godscroft as a popular saying in his time) are inscribed around the emblem:

"So mony guid as of ye Dovglas beinge,
Of ane surname was ne'er in Scotland seine.

I will ye charge, efter yat I depart,
To holy grawe, and thair bury my hart;
Let it remane ever BOTHE TYME AND HOWR,
To ye last day I sie my Saviour.
I do protest in tyme of al my ringe,
Ye lyk subject had never ony keing."

This curious and valuable relic was nearly lost during the civil war of 1745-6, being carried away from Douglas Castle by some of those in arms for Prince Charles. But great interest having been made by the Duke of Douglas among the chief partisans of the Stuart, it was at length restored. It resembles a Highland claymore, of the usual size, is of an excellent temper, and admirably poised.

—— *Martin Swart.*—P. 508.

A German general, who commanded the auxiliaries sent by the Duchess of Burgundy with Lambert Simnel. He was defeated and killed at Stokefield. The name of this German general is preserved by that of the field of battle, which is called, after him, Swart-moor.—There were songs about him long current in England.—See Dissertation prefixed in RITSON'S *Ancient Songs*, 1792, p. lxi.

—— *The Cross.*—P. 511.

The Cross of Edinburgh was an ancient and curious structure. The lower part was an octagonal tower, sixteen feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet high. At each angle there was a pillar, and between them an arch, of the Grecian shape. Above these was a projecting battlement, with a turret at each corner, and medallions, of rude but curious workmanship, between them. Above this rose the proper Cross, a column of one stone, upwards of twenty feet high, surmounted with a unicorn. This pillar is preserved in the grounds of the property of Drum, near Edinburgh. The Magistrates of Edinburgh, in 1756, with consent of the Lords of Session (*proh pudor!*) destroyed this curious monument, under a wanton pretext that it encumbered the street; while, on the one hand, they left an ugly mass called the Luckenbooths,

and, on the other, an awkward, long, and low guard-house, which were fifty times more encumbrance than the venerable and inoffensive Cross.

From the tower of the Cross, so long as it remained, the heralds published the acts of Parliament; and its site, marked by radii, diverging from a stone centre, in the High Street, is still the place where proclamations are made.

This awful summons came.—P. 511.

This supernatural citation is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was, probably, like the apparition at Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV. The following account from Pitscottie is characteristically minute. I need only add to it, that Plotcock, or Plutock, is no other than Pluto.

"In this meantime, when they were taking forth their artillery, and the King being in the Abbey for the time, there was a cry heard at the Market-cross of Edinburgh, at the hour of midnight, proclaiming as it had been a summons, which was named and called by the proclaimer thereof, The Summons of Plotcock; which desired all men to compear, both Earl, and Lord, and Baron, and all honest gentlemen within the town (every man specified by his own name), to compear, within the space of forty days, before his master, where it should happen him to appoint, and be for the time, under the pain of disobedience. But whether this summons was proclaimed by vain persons, night-walkers, or drunken men, for their pastime, or if it was a spirit, I cannot tell truly; but it was shown to me, that an indweller of the town, Mr. Richard Lawson, being evil-disposed, ganging in his gallery-stair foreanent the Cross, hearing this voice proclaiming this summons, thought marvel what it should be, cried on his servant to bring him his purse; and when he had brought him it, he took out a crown, and cast over the stair, saying, 'I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence thereof, and takes me all whole in the mercy of God, and Christ Jesus his son.' Verily, the author of this . . . swore to me, there was no man that escaped that was called in this summons, but that one man alone which made his protestation, and appealed from the said summons; but all the lave were perished in the field with the king."

Drove the Monks forth of Coventry.—P. 515.

This relates to the catastrophe of a real Robert de Marmion, in the reign of King Stephen, whom William of Newbury describes with some attributes of my fictitious hero: "*Homo bellicosus, ferocia, et astucia, fere nullo suo tempore impar.*" This Baron, having expelled the Monks from the church of Coventry, was not long of experiencing the divine judgment, as the same monks, no doubt, termed his disaster. Having waged a feudal war with the Earl of Chester, Marmion's horse fell, as he charged in the van of his troop, against a body of the Earl's followers: the rider's thigh being broken by the fall, his head was cut off by a common foot-soldier, ere he could receive any succour. The whole story is told by William of Newbury.

At Iol.—P. 518.

The Iol of the heathen Danes (a word still applied to Christmas in Scotland) was solemnised with great festivity. The humour of the Danes at table displayed itself in pelting each other with bones; and Torfæus tells a long and curious story, in the History of Hrolfe Kraka, of one Hottus, an inmate of the Court of Denmark, who was so generally assailed with these missiles, that he constructed, out of the bones with which he was overwhelmed, a very respectable intrenchment

against those who continued the raillery. The dances of the northern warriors round the great fires of pine-trees, are commemorated by Olaus Magnus, who says, they danced with such fury holding each other by the hands, that, if the grasp of any failed, he was pitched into the fire with the velocity of a sling. The sufferer, on such occasions, was instantly plucked out, and obliged to quaff off a certain measure of ale, as a penalty for "spoiling the king's fire."

On Christmas eve.—P. 519.

In Roman Catholic countries, mass is never said at night, except on Christmas eve.

Who lists may in their mumming see.—P. 519.

It seems certain, that the *Mummers* of England, who (in Northumberland at least) used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless ploughshare; and the *Guisards* of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama. In Scotland (*me ipso teste*), we were wont, during my boyhood, to take the characters of the apostles, at least of Peter, Paul, and Judas Iscariot; the first had the keys, the second carried a sword, and the last the bag, in which the dole of our neighbours' plumb-cake was deposited. One played a champion, and recited some traditional rhymes; another was

> . . . . "Alexander, King of Macedon,
> Who conquer'd all the world but Scotland alone:
> When he came to Scotland his courage grew cold,
> To see a little nation courageous and bold."

These, and many such verses, were repeated, but by rote, and unconnectedly. There was also, occasionally, I believe, a Saint George.

Where my great-grandsire came of old,
With amber beard and flaxen hair.—P. 520.

Mr. Scott of Harden, my kind and affectionate friend, and distant relation, has the original of a poetical invitation, addressed from his grandfather to my relative, from which a few lines in the text are imitated. They are dated, as the epistle in the text, from Mertoun-house, the seat of the Harden family.

> "With amber beard, and flaxen-hair,
> And reverend apostolic air,
> Free of anxiety and care,
> Come hither, Christmas-day, and dine;
> We'll mix sobriety with wine,
> And easy mirth with thoughts divine.
> We Christians think it holiday,
> On it no sin to feast or play;
> Others, in spite, may fast and pray.
> No superstition in the use
> Our ancestors made of a goose;
> Why may not we, as well as they,
> Be innocently blithe that day,
> On goose or pie, on wine or ale,
> And scorn enthusiastic zeal?—
> Pray come, and welcome, or plague rott
> Your friend and landlord, Walter Scott.
> "*Mr. Walter Scott, Lessuden.*"

The Spirit's Blasted Tree.—P. 521.

See "*Ceubren yr Ellyll*, or The Spirit's Blasted Tree," a legendary tale, by the Reverend George Warrington:—

"The event, on which this tale is founded, is preserved by tradition in the family of the Vaughans of Hengwyrt; nor is it entirely lost, even among the common people, who still point out this oak to the passenger. The enmity between the two Welsh chieftains, Howel Sele and Owen Glendwr, was extreme, and marked by vile treachery in the one and ferocious cruelty in the other. Some trace of Howel Sele's mansion was to be seen a few years ago, and may perhaps be still visible, in the park of Nannau, now belonging to Sir Robert Vaughan, Baronet, in the wild and romantic tracks of Merionethshire."

The Highlander——————
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If ask'd to tell a fairy tale."—P. 521.

The *Daoine shi'*, or *Men of Peace*, of the Scottish Highlanders, rather resemble the Scandinavian *Duergar* than the English Fairies. Notwithstanding their name, they are, if not absolutely malevolent, at least peevish, discontented, and apt to do mischief on slight provocation. The belief of their existence is deeply impressed on the Highlanders, who think they are particularly offended at mortals who talk of them, who wear their favourite colour green, or in any respect interfere with their affairs. This is especially to be avoided on Friday, when, whether as dedicated to Venus, with whom, in Germany, this subterraneous people are held nearly connected, or for a more solemn reason, they are more active, and possessed of greater power. Some curious particulars concerning the popular superstitions of the Highlanders may be found in Dr. Graham's *Picturesque Sketches of Perthshire.*

The towers of Franchémont.—P. 521.

The journal of the friend to whom the Fourth Canto of the Poem is inscribed, furnished me with the following account of a striking superstition.

"Passed the pretty little village of Franchémont (near Spaw), with the romantic ruins of the old castle of the Counts of that name. The road leads through many delightful vales on a rising ground; at the extremity of one of them stands the ancient castle, now the subject of many superstitious legends. It is firmly believed by the neighbouring peasantry that the last Baron of Franchémont deposited, in one of the vaults of the castle, a ponderous chest, containing an immense treasure in gold and silver, which, by some magic spell, was intrusted to the care of the Devil, who is constantly found sitting on the chest in the shape of a huntsman. Any one adventurous enough to touch the chest is instantly seized with the palsy. Yet if anybody can discover the mystic words used by the person who deposited the treasure, and pronounce them, the fiend must instantly decamp. I had many stories of a similar nature from a peasant, who had himself seen the Devil in the shape of a great cat."

The very form of Hilda fair.—P. 525.

"I shall only produce one instance more of the great veneration paid to Lady Hilda, which still prevails even in these our days; and that is, the constant opinion that she rendered, and still renders, her-

self visible, on some occasions, in the Abbey of Streanshalh or Whitby, where she so long resided. At a particular time of the year (viz. in the summer months), at ten or eleven in the forenoon, the sunbeams fall in the inside of the northern part of the choir; and 'tis then that the spectators, who stand on the west side of Whitby churchyard, so as just to see the most northerly part of the abbey pass the north end of Whitby church, imagine they perceive, in one of the highest windows there, the resemblance of a woman arrayed in a shroud. Though we are certain this is only a reflection caused by the splendour of the sunbeams, yet fame reports it, and it is constantly believed among the vulgar, to be an appearance of Lady Hilda in her shroud, or rather in a glorified state; before which, I make no doubt, the Papists, even in these our days, offer up their prayers with as much zeal and devotion as before any other image of their most glorified saint."—CHARLTON'S *History of Whitby*, p. 33.

——— the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont of yore, in battle fray,
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.—P. 530.

The Earl of Angus had strength and personal activity corresponding to his courage. Spens of Kilspindie, a favourite of James IV., having spoken of him lightly, the Earl met him while hawking, and, compelling him to single combat, at one blow cut asunder his thigh bone, and killed him on the spot. But ere he could obtain James's pardon for this slaughter, Angus was obliged to yield his castle of Hermitage, in exchange for that of Bothwell, which was some diminution to the family greatness. The sword with which he struck so remarkable a blow, was presented by his descendant James, Earl of Morton, afterwards Regent of Scotland, to Lord Lindesay of the Byres, when he defied Bothwell to single combat on Carberry Hill. See Introduction to the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

Lennel's convent.—P. 534.

This was a Cistertian house of religion, now almost entirely demolished. Lennel House was long the residence of Patrick Brydone, well known in the literary world. It is situated near Coldstream, almost opposite to Cornhill, and consequently very near to Flodden Field.

Twisel bridge.—P. 535.

On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's headquarters were at Barmoor Wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden-hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September 1513, Surrey marched in a north-westerly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel-bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his army between King James and his supplies from Scotland, and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river in his front. But as the passage, both over the bridge and through the ford, was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage while struggling with these natural obstacles. I know not if we are to impute James's forbearance to want of military skill, or to the romantic declaration which Pitscottie puts in his mouth, "that he was deter-

mined to have his enemies before him on a plain field," and therefore would suffer no interruption to be given, even by artillery, to their passing the river.

Hence might they see the full array.—P. 537.

The reader cannot here expect a full account of the battle of Flodden; but when the English army, by their skilful countermarch, were fairly placed between King James and his own country, the Scottish monarch resolved to fight; and, setting fire to his tents, descended from the ridge of Flodden to secure the neighbouring eminence of Brankstone, on which that village is built. Thus the two armies met, almost without seeing each other, when, according to the old poem of "Flodden Field,"

"The English line stretch'd east and west,
And southward were their faces set;
The Scottish northward proudly prest,
And manfully their foes they met."

The spot from which Clara views the battle must be supposed to have been on a hillock commanding the rear of the English right wing, which was defeated, and in which conflict Marmion is supposed to have fallen.

— Brian Tunstall, stainless knight.—P. 538.

Sir Brian Tunstall, called, in the romantic language of the time, Tunstall the Undefiled, was one of the few Englishmen of rank slain at Flodden. He figures in the ancient English poem, to which I may safely refer my readers. Tunstall, perhaps, derived his epithet of *undefiled* from his white armour and banner, the latter bearing a white cock, about to crow, as well as from his unstained loyalty and knightly faith. His place of residence was Thurland Castle.

And fell on Flodden plain.—P. 546.

There can be no doubt that King James fell in the battle of Flodden. He was killed, says the curious French Gazette, within a lance's length of the Earl of Surrey; and the same account adds, that none of his division were made prisoners, though many were killed; a circumstance that testifies the desperation of their resistance. The Scottish historians record many of the idle reports which passed among the vulgar of their day. Home was accused, by the popular voice, not only of failing to support the King, but even of having carried him out of the field, and murdered him. And this tale was revived in my remembrance, by an unauthenticated story of a skeleton, wrapped in a bull's hide, and surrounded with an iron chain, said to have been found in the well of Home Castle. An unhewn column marks the spot where James fell, still called the King's Stone.

The fair cathedral storm'd and took.—P. 546.

This storm of Lichfield cathedral, which had been garrisoned on the part of the King, took place in the Great Civil War. Lord Brook, who, with Sir John Gill, commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the vizor of his helmet. The royalists remarked that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's cathedral, and upon St. Chad's Day, and received his death-wound in the very eye with which, he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. The magnificent church in question suffered cruelly upon this and other occasions, the principal spire being ruined by the fire of the besiegers.

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